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With the Author's

Sincerest Regards

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A

MONTH

IN THE

FORESTS OF FRANCE.

BY

THE HON. GRANTLEY F. BERKELEY.

LONDON:

LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, LONGMANS, & ROBERTS.

1857.

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TO

THE COUNTESS OF SEFTON,

WITH EVERY SENTIMENT OF THE SINCEREST REGARD
AND FRIENDSHIP,

THIS WORK

Is Dedicated

BY

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

" Oh, brother writers, sporting men,
Gun in your hand as well as pen,
The old as well as youthful —
I caution all against that bow,
Too long at times, as ye well know,
For useful tales or truthful ;
I pray you henceforth be exact —
Fiction's not half so strange as fact ! "

Berkeley.

In thus offering to the Public an account of the Chase of the Wolf and Boar, as shared in by me in the beautiful Forests of France, I am not without the hope that these pages will afford amusement to the readers of either sex, and hence I have placed them under the sanction made apparent by the Dedication. Throughout the work it has been my object never to overstep the legitimate run of facts as they occurred; and I would impress upon all my brother Sportsmen, who either have written or are to write

their adventures, that a single far-fetched or over-strained paragraph casts a doubt on the veracity of a whole volume, and therefore their desire should be to state the truth, and nothing but the truth, from the beginning to the end.

Men who write on sporting subjects are but too apt to seek opportunities in which to compliment their entertainers, and by false descriptions to gain undue applause for their sport and establishments. This ought not to be so; for if journalists perpetually spoke in praise, and declined to point out egregious errors, what chance would there ever be of introducing a better system?

In writing from the castle, château, or house of an entertainer, care should invariably be taken not to trench on private or personal matters, — a fault sadly fallen into by some of my predecessors, but from which the good taste of the sportsmen of the present day will, I am sure, for the future guard them. Sport, and matters pertaining to the Chase, which partake almost as much of a public as a private amusement, afford an ample field for the pen, and when naturally and faithfully described,

the account cannot but bear with it a freshness to make it generally palateable.

In conclusion, I can fairly assert, that I have seen so much of the Forests of France and their four-footed denizens, as to make me think that in France the chase with hounds might be maintained in the highest possible perfection of sport, and that nothing is wanted there but English means and method. In MS. now in my possession, I have perfected a complete definition of the course which the French sportsmen should pursue in getting together servants, hunters, and hounds, with every needful instruction regarding the chase of the wolf, boar, stag, deer, fox, and otter. It is my intention to submit the work thus alluded to, to the acceptation of the trade in Paris; for, with their country and their beasts of chase, I am indeed sorry to see my kind and hospitable friends, as well as the generality of gentlemen and sportsmen in France, so lamentably deficient in everything relating to the kennel.

A MONTH

IN

THE FORESTS OF FRANCE.

CHAPTER I.

"We'll talk of that anon. — 'Tis sweet to hear
At midnight, on the blue and moonlit deep,
The song and oar of Adria's gondolier,
By distance mellow'd, o'er the waters sweep;
'Tis sweet to see the evening star appear;
'Tis sweet to listen as the night-winds creep
From leaf to leaf; 'tis sweet to view on high
The rainbow, based on ocean, span the sky."

Byron.

On a beautiful day in the early part of September, 1856, I left Beacon Lodge for the train which started from the Christchurch-road station at half-past one, my intention being to dine at Matchem's, the Dolphin Hotel, and steam from Southampton for Havre by the packet at twelve o'clock the same night. It seemed almost miraculous that, as a first-class passenger, and for the sum or passage-money of twenty-seven shil-

lings, I should depart from Beacon Lodge at an amiable hour on Wednesday morning, dine comfortably at Southampton, and find myself again pleasantly seated at Paris on the Thursday night; but, thanks to hot water, and the go-ahead character of the age, distance is boiled to nothing, and Time, the only enemy whose wilful rule death and the doctor can alone deal with, is all that the traveller has now to consider. The minute has slain the mile, and Time has added another laurel to the despot's crown.

How happily I had passed my time preparing for this journey! The two great double guns of the 11-gauge were thoroughly inspected and packed carefully in their cases; my old favourite single rifle had been petted up by Lang, in Cockspur-street, till it looked quite fresh; and every crevice of each case was stuffed with wadding, balls, and heavy cartridges. In addition to these, my straight hunting-horns, by Shyrly, of Regent-street, my spurs, my belts, my boots, my hunting-knife, and everything that a sportsman or a gentleman could require, were gathered together and nicely stowed away; and when all was cared for, even to my fishing-tackle, with a shake to the travelling dress in which I stood, I said to myself with all the gusto of a boy on the eve of his *first* 1st of September: "Now for my friend D'Anchald, his

old château of the wilderness (Château Sauvages), his wolves, his boars, his roe-deer, his foxes, wild-cats, martin-cats, and otters; here goes to fraternise with 'em all."

Perhaps, for the better information of my readers, I should have stated the agreeable fact which induced me to pay this visit. Monsieur le Vicomte d'Anchald, having read the account of some of my bloodhound Druid's single-handed performances in the destruction of the wild deer in the royal New Forest of Hampshire, determined to come all the way from his château on the Nièvre, between Nevers and Prémery, two hundred miles southward of Paris, to see the English chase, and to ascertain if he could not apply my plan to the successful pursuit of some of the creatures with which the crown forest where he had the appointment of *louvetier* or wolf-hunter abounded. He came to me at Beacon Lodge, was out with Druid when he hunted down his deer, rode well, and only missed giving to the doe the *coup de grâce* by not knowing the locality as well as I did. He joined me in my sea-fishings, and shared in all that the season afforded, bought some of my bloodhounds, accepted others which I was too happy to place at his disposal, and bought several couples of foxhounds from the best English kennels. His object accom-

plished,—that of seeing Druid hunt down his deer, and taking my advice as to forming a future pack of hounds,—he repaired to France, with a pledge from me that I would return the visit and fraternise with him. His hospitable invitation extended to Druid and my pony Blossom; but as to these I made no promise, fearing that, in the packet or the railway, and at the château, I might not be able to get for Druid the care and accommodation he needed; *and, without condition, to maintain his speed and endurance,* I well knew the efforts of my hound would be in vain. Having fortunately considered all things, I resolved not to take Druid or Blossom. Had I done so, half the porters on the French lines of railways would have been maimed by the former, and the efforts of the noble hound while in France annulled by the want of proper food.

Thus, then, I came to the resolution (wise and philosophic, as well as economical) not to take Druid or Blossom, or a servant of any sort or description, but to look to everything myself, and be amused rather than annoyed with difficulties arising from my indifferent knowledge of the French language—economy and good-humour the motto on my flag. These considerations, however, did not prevent me from taking my two little white fox and otter terriers,

Nipper and Tacks, as well as a fine bloodhound bitch named Malwood, and four bloodhound whelps by Druid—in all seven; and thus we arrived at Southampton. It being my intention to be useful to such as may hereafter travel, as well as amusing in this account of my visit to the French forests, it behoves me here to state that, the cheapness of my passage from Southampton *viâ* Havre to Paris full in view, I put fifteen sovereigns into my pocket, deeming that these would be ample for my journey to Nevers, at which town my kind and hospitable entertainer was to meet me. Somehow or other, wherever I go I have always a multitude of persons of a certain class willing and anxious to do my bidding. If they please me, I am merry, and, as far as my means go (or perhaps a little farther than they ought to go), liberal—that is if shillings, sixpences, and fourpenny-bits can bear that graceful term. If they displease me I am sharp even to kicks and cuffs; but (somehow or other, I am obliged to use that term again) kicks, cuffs, and money come and go with great good-humour; and myself and my numerous adherents never have any quarrels. At the time of the Crusades there was a famous general and popular officer whose *nom de guerre* was "Walter the Pennyless," and whose following or army was

always immense, but who never had any money to pay his soldiers. I am sure we resemble each other. I have found it so at popular elections; and in my everyday walk through life the same affinity occurs.

Arrived at the terminus at Southampton, the usual civility and attention met me; and then my parcels, amounting to eleven separate packages, were seized by nearly as many industrious and assiduous friends. A hand-barrow ran against my legs on one side; the huge omnibus yawned for me on the other; a skirmisher flew to call me a cab; and, by the time I received my four-footed companions from the attentive and careful guard, who had retained them with him in his van, I discovered that my luggage was gone in a dozen different forms of locomotion to the Dolphin Hotel, whither I followed with a staff of porters and cads, who all insisted upon being likewise led by my dogs. It was impossible for me to help this. All my followers were old friends, who had really been useful to me, perhaps to the neglect of others, on bustling days. I was in the best of humours, and so were they; they were all anxious to pat and caress my dogs, with the question if "Malwood was Druid" a dozen times repeated; so, feeling that it is always "merry in hall when beards wag all," and as I was about to have some dinner, I marshalled my

followers in the stable-yard of the Dolphin, and sent them all away rejoicing. Matchem's ostler then was transformed into my kennel-man; and he most efficiently fed my four-footed companions and otherwise cared for them while I was at dinner: I knew that I could trust him as if he had been my own servant.

About half-past six in the evening my seaward procession was again formed (infinitely larger than the circumstances demanded), and we proceeded happily enough to the toll-gate admitting to the quay; where the misanthrope who, according to "Boz," indulges in his splenetic hatred of mankind by taking toll from every passer-by, mulcted me for reaching the conveyance for which I had already paid. On coming to the steps inducting to the packet's deck, they were so long and steep that Malwood refused to stir a foot further, and by her resolute resistance induced the attendance of no end of amphibious cads or sea-porters, all of whom were so jolly and obedient as well as so zealous to volunteer to join my standard, that my purse refused any longer to stand the run on its loose silver, and at once I contracted a debt with the obliging steward of the packet, and saw the impossibility of economy. My army of martyrs having wished me "hearty good luck," some

of the crew advanced to introduce my dogs to the most comfortable little horsebox, well strawed and covered with a tarpaulin, that had been provided for them on deck, and for which I had written. Into this I put the hamper containing the four whelps, and then fastened Malwood and the terriers with their chains. As this was being perfected, I was much amused with the way in which a jolly tar fraternised with my terrier Nipper. The man was in ecstasies with the dog, and treated him as if he had been his own son, all because, as he assured me, "the little dog was so like himself, ever ready for love or war." Nip's attentions to both Malwood and Tacks, as well as his inclination to "pitch into anything alive," I fear warranted all the sailor's conclusions.

I had now nothing to care for but myself. East, west, north, and south were then carefully scanned over, to ascertain the probability of the continuance of smooth water and convalescent passengers, when, all observations being satisfactory, I repaired to the "infernal regions" below, to select a berth, resolving that if there was ruffle enough to make any of the passengers ill, I would share dear old Malwood's cabin; for, never knowing what sea-sickness is myself, it is a horror to me to be among those who suffer from its terrible throes. In selecting a berth

in a saloon, like that in the Havre and Southampton packets, I always take one as much aft as possible, that does for either a couch to lie or sit on, the feet being on the floor of the cabin. So situated, the berth is easily attainable; and, in reaching or leaving it, there is no chance of making the nose of some half-dead face a stepping-stone to freedom.

All being arranged for the night, with the prospect of the finest weather, I whiled away the heavy hours till eleven P.M. by walking the deck and watching the arrival of my fellow-passengers — speculating, as is my custom, on their calling, their motives, their minds, and probable manners; and resolved to be good-humoured as well as attentive to them all. Oh, how I rejoiced when the evolutions of the wheels began! and how I longed for the first view of the Havre cliffs, in the gray dawn of morn! and how I dozed off in dreams of boars at bay and wild-looking wolves — till I was aroused by the passage of a tall, calm, sedate, but go-ahead-looking man, who, with sea-going legs certainly (for he paced as steadily as I should on the floor of my own drawingroom), walked leisurely round the saloon, eyeing one berth after the other. When he arrived quite aft, I was sitting on my little couch, my legs on the floor, looking at him; and, on observing that he still eyed

the last berth on his side, wistfully, I said, in a sort of bantering tone, "What, *can't* you make up your mind?"

He faced about, regarded me intently for a moment, and then, as if catching my humour, replied: "I 've not much to make up my mind upon, the berths are all taken. Your legs are down; if you 'll permit me, I 'll sit a while by you."

"I shall be most happy," I replied, for I liked his look of intelligence as well as his general bearing; and in a few moments we were in conversation as if we had been acquainted for years. He was the captain of an American trader, — so I was right as to his "sea legs;" and, having found that out, I discussed with him the wild sports of his country,— what was best to hunt, and what to eat, — and discovered that bull-frogs and canvass-backed ducks were the greatest delicacies. He said, at first he hated the idea of eating frogs, the same as I did; but, having once tasted them, the repugnance to the reptile vanished.

"Well," I continued, "and now tell me what is your opinion as to slavery?"

"I am an Abolitionist," he replied, setting his keen inquisitive eyes full on mine.

"The deuce you are! I should not have thought that. The abolition of slavery and the infraction of

apprenticeship have ruined me. It was, as carried out, one of the greatest errors the Whigs committed —and, by Jove, that is saying a good deal."

He looked hard at me for a moment, and then rejoined, "That is, I am an Abolitionist *when the blacks are fit to receive their liberty.*"

"Oh, oh! then you agree with me their time is not arrived yet?"

"No," he said, "and won't be for some years to come. Why, Providence itself still shows they are only fit to labour for the whites."

"How is the Divine will so marked?"

"How! why look at 'em; look at their woolly heads; it aint like human hair—nor their colour neither; they don't even smell like a Christian. It's evident, all the world over, that they have no business to be put on a footing with the whites yet."

"Enough, Captain," I replied; "it had been better for all of us British Guiana proprietors if you had been king of our colonies. I always say that a monosyllable conveys a deal of meaning;—your 'yet' would have lasted my life, and the lives of babes unborn!"

The Captain smiled, and said, "Well, aint it so?"

"I can't deny some of your personal facts," I replied;' "and even spiritually I fear that which

England has done in British Guiana is very far from increasing the true interests of religion; but, though I would have continued the apprenticeship in the colonies of my country, I don't go quite so far as you do."

"I know it," he said. "I, as an American, would neither sit down with them, nor eat nor drink with them, nor go to the same theatre or place of amusement."

"Well, but, Captain, how is it that the Americans will go to hear a black or coloured preacher?"

"Oh, that's different," he cried; "if a man's got a call that way, let him follow it."

"Can he have a 'call,'" I rejoined, "if he is unfitted to enjoy the blessings of freedom?"

"Oh, I don't know," replied the Captain; "there's no harm in hearing him; you're not obliged to follow. You'll want to rest, now, sir; many thanks for the seat you've given me; I'll look for some place to turn in. Good-night."

At this we parted. I slept very soundly for some time, when, on casting my eyes on the little windows of the saloon, I saw with delight that rosy-fingered morn had touched the skies, and cast a tint upon the deep gray sea. Few moments then elapsed ere I was on deck, and the pretty outline of the Havre

cliffs for the first time met my view. Several passengers were already enjoying the fresh morning air; and, when they were pretty well all up, I went down for some breakfast and returned to the deck again. There stood my friend the Captain, drawn up to his full height, and sternly intent on the form of some receding passenger, then perambulating "forward."

"Hallo, Captain!" I exclaimed, "what's up and in the wind now? You don't look pleased."

"Pleased!" he sternly replied; "and how should I be? look what's coming now!"

Turning my head in the direction he indicated, I saw an intelligent-looking coloured gentleman, well-dressed, advancing aft the funnel, and then replied: "Oh! I see. Well, what harm is he doing?"

"Harm! why just look at him! There he goes walking in front of those ladies that are seated! There's impudence in him! Why, I wouldn't do so! What business has he abaft the funnel? I wonder some one don't drop into him!"

"Well, now, Captain," I said, "if you go down to breakfast, and he comes too, what will you do? You can't 'drop into him;' so what course would you take?"

"Take!" he cried; "why, if I was half famished,

I'd quit the table as long as he sat there, that I would."

I left the Captain to his smothered indignation; and, being much taken with the appearance of this coloured gentleman (a veritable black from head to foot), ascertained who he was, and made his acquaintance. I showed him my bloodhound; and talking a great deal to him, found that he was perfect in the English language, understood French, and was altogether a gentleman of very considerable information.

When I returned to the Captain he asked, as I thought with a suppressed sneer, how I liked my friend; so I replied, "Very much," and told him who he was. I do not know if the information I afforded removed any of his objections to colour, though it certainly considerably aroused his curiosity; but, as to making the acquaintance, I am not aware that he followed my example.

Nearer and nearer yet the packet came to the cliffs of France, leaving a long feather in her wake as the wheels revolved; the red-sailed French pilots dipped across our course, as small birds do at a passing hawk; and each passenger began to show symptoms of anxiety as to his luggage. To the care of the steward I consigned mine, contenting myself

with an inspection of my dogs' collars, when, in doing so, from behind Malwood's long ear I took a fine athletic New Forest fly. "Oh, ho!" I cried in glee; "now for an entomological experiment! I'll introduce my winged countryman to a French cab-horse, and watch the effect." Proud of the acquisition, I showed my prisoner to my companions of the voyage, with nearly all of whom I was on jolly terms. In my fly my coloured friend took great interest; and, had not we had other things to look to, I believe that I should have headed a procession of all nations to see my insect hawk swoop upon his first French quarry, and to observe the enlivening consequences. Oh! what fun it would have been! What hissings, oaths, and rattling "r's" the driver would have uttered! My thirst for experiment was, alas! thwarted. My dogs fell into "untenty" hands, and in grasping at their couples the fly escaped, and, instead of flying to land, wheeled round my hat, and then flew down into the saloon — I suppose to take his passage back.

Having whiled away some of the time spent in waiting for water enough to take us into the docks, and enjoyed the inestimable blessings of fresh air and the beautiful prospect afforded by the now sunlit and deep blue sea which washed the shores of, to me, a

land of promise, I once more returned to the saloon for something I had left there. Seated at their breakfast were two or three ladies and one or two gentlemen; while, still lying in his berth, a tiger watching for his prey, I beheld a "gent"—he could not have been a gentleman, as the following facts illustrated. Just as I entered, and apparently soon after the ladies had commenced their breakfast, the "gent" arose, and, undoing his braces, pulling off his coat and waistcoat, baring his neck, and tucking up his shirt-sleeves, bade the steward prepare the end of the table for his mimic ablutions. Stopping to survey him, in speechless wonder, I then saw him place a very small dressing-case on the table, whence he produced a toothbrush. With a leering eye to the ladies—poor gent!—in the hope that they admired, did this mistaken biped proceed to dip his face into the common basin (in all probability scarce wiped since its use for other purposes), to wash his mouth, and to resemble spouts at the eaves of houses and the end of gutters, by filling his cheeks and sputtering the contents again into the basin. Then—Heaven help the mark!—he made side twists of his features while he brushed the bushes or great tufts of hair on either side his face, and combed or coaxed more into goatishness a would-be "Newgate fringe." During

all this mimicry of cleanliness, although the ladies were evidently disgusted, for myself I confess that I was fascinated, and for a time a fixture to the cabin floor; although within me burned an extraordinary desire to become the champion of Woman.

"Well," I whispered to myself, "now for it!" One of those gentlemen at table with the ladies will assuredly poise yonder lump of butter on the end of a fork, and, sling-like, lodge it in the gent's eye, with a civilly expressed desire to assist his soap! But no, nothing of the sort took place. So, thinking that, were I to thrust myself forward in protection of ladies, whose lawful protectors were perhaps seated by their sides, and a "row" was the consequence, the press of the United Kingdom would head innumerable columns with "Mr. Grantley Berkeley again!" — with an immense effort I shook off the horrible fascination, stared idiotically on the inactive gentlemen and the recumbent butter, and again trod the lively deck and breathed the healthful and soothing blessings of the seaborne breeze.

On the signal being made that there was sufficient water to admit us, we steamed into port; and then what a bustle took place — "Every one for himself; Heaven," I hope, "for us all; and the devil take the hindmost."

CHAP. II.

"Hail, happy power! that to the present lends
Such views; not all on Fortune's wheel depends,
Hope, fair enchantress, drives each cloud away,
And now enjoys the glad, but distant day."

Crabbe.

Now, then, on again from Havre to Paris *for twenty-seven shillings!*

"Be quick, steward, and tell me what I have to pay for my dogs."

"Two pounds ten shillings, sir."

"What!" I exclaimed, "are not the little whelps in the basket just weaned to be considered in the light of 'halves;' as they term blessed babes in carriages, who really are a nuisance to every progressing soul but their mammas?"

"No, sir; there is no allowance made for puppies — big and little are paid for all alike."

"Economy, economy! whither art thou fled?" And with a sigh I dived again deep into my purse — not forgetting to splice the main-brace of the jolly

tar who had taken such a fancy to Nipper; and then, one by one, with the rest of the passengers, we were drafted up the ladder, — boxes, trunks, and parcels huddled into the custom-house together.

It was of the utmost moment to me to catch the very first train to Paris. If I failed in doing so, I should not arrive in that city till ten at night, when it would have been difficult to have obtained food and safe accommodation for my dogs. In order to facilitate my passage through the custom-house, I had written to the chief of that department to apprise him of my advent, and to describe the apparent bulkiness of my luggage, its nature, and my design as to the first train. I must say that from all the officials that morning I met with the civilest attention; and they gave me as little trouble as possible, till the attendant custom-house porter lifted my three gun-cases, which were bound together. He poised them doubtfully in his arms, looked suspiciously at his superiors in a sort of pulpit, and having gained their attention, he asked me what the package was.

"Three fusees."

"What else?"

"Nothing, save their necessary sporting accompaniments."

He shook his head still dissatisfied; when, having

said something to the men in the pulpit, they civilly requested me to disclose the contents.

"Oh! my train, my train," I groaned to myself as I undid the guns and cast an eye over the ten other packages lying uncorded over the floor, and heard the impatient whine of Malwood outside. "Then," I cried, "look, and believe your own eyes;" and puzzled very much the eyes of some of them were with the long-range heavy green cartridges.

"Cartouche," they said taking one up, "poudre et balle?"

"Non; shot," I replied, enjoying their mystification; when I was obliged to interrupt the speculations of a soldier who stood by, deeply interested in the contents of the gun-cases, and hastened to repack all my things. Reader, if you desire speed, as well as the retention of temper, and you travel in France, *on no account cord your luggage.*

At last I got everything passed, well pleased with the uniform civility of the officials; and then forgathering with a "touter" for one of the hotels, who no doubt had made England too hot to hold him, and who therefore spoke French very well, I declined his civil proposition of being my courier while I remained in France, and only hired him to assist me with a cab and his attention as far as the railway-

station. The omnibus had gone, all passengers save myself were swallowed up in it, and time pressed; so, amidst the gaping amusement of a crowd, I packed my luggage in an open cab, and climbed on the top of it with Malwood and the terriers, crying out to the imaginary driver (he did not drive, he only held fast to the reins and swore at the imperturbable "tit," who hobbled in a sort of trance between the shafts,) to make all the haste he could. My demand for more speed having no further effect than to quicken the driver's action, and to peril his soul from his frequent breach of the third commandment, with a longing wish for my forest fly, I suggested to my temporary courier that he should inform the foreign subject on the elevated seat that, if he did not go fast enough to catch the train, I would rather go to prison than pay him. This settled the question: the driver's action got furious, his oaths and desecrations more frequent, the cracks of his long whip perfectly alarming to my dogs, while he drowned the noise of his own wheels with r's, so well pronounced and so continuously rattled, interlarded with "allez! allez;" that the "timber-legged toddler" at last awakened from his leathern trance, thinking, probably, that the man who tugged at his head from behind him had gone mad, and brought me to the station but just in time.

Out we all bundled—hounds, terriers, baskets, boxes, courier, and all,—and leaving my temporary attendant to get the luggage and the dogs in (I had also to pay for luggage being over weight), I took my own ticket. Not an instant to lose; so as it was impossible for me to comprehend the sum I had to pay—francs, sous, and centimes,—I held some money in my hand and told the clerk to take the amount of my ticket, vigilantly watching and pretending to know every fraction of the sum he handled. *By mistake of course*, from circumstances which happened to me at dusk on my return to England, *viâ* Havre, I am strongly induced to suspect that at this Havre station I was *accidentally robbed*. Be that as it may, I cannot prove it on any of the clerks; but, as I suppose the French laws are as loose in regard to railway clerks as they are to the omnibus owners and cab drivers and *town* police, why all the proofs in the world would have failed to have obtained an Englishman and a stranger justice. However, I pass from this matter for the present, having a vast deal more to say to it when this narration concludes.

Oh what a relief it was to find myself at last at rest in the well-appointed first-class carriage of the train, with time before me to marvel over the anything but cheapness of my travel! I liked the looks of my

companions — two of them were pretty girls; the third was a moustached French gentleman, and perhaps soldier; and the other a hale and hearty strong man, looking very like a countryman of mine. Oh how I devoured the prospect on either side! Not so much, dear reader, the features of the ladies as those of *la belle France*. Everything was new to me; the weather was beautiful; the air soft and genial; and my heart full and free, light and merry.

"Well," said I to myself, "either that French gentleman and handsome girl who sits opposite him are man and wife, and have said their say so often that not a word remains for interchange, or he is phlegmatic and silent enough for a Dutchman." They never exchanged a word between Havre and Paris. With my two companions opposite me I was soon on the best of terms. Such terms as it seems to me that the English and Americans should always be on; and nothing could be more amusing than our conversation.

I had never seen a vineyard; so on passing one I named it; but my pretty neighbour replied "Oh, no, they were French beans;" and being in no humour to contradict such pretty lips, I let her assertion pass. She was very kind and attentive to the dumb man (as I termed myself in regard to the French lan-

guage), and on every occasion during the journey was my explaining voice in all difficulties with the natives.

The country was very pretty on either side of the Seine; and the low range of hills which bounded the valley remarkable for a uniformity of height. The cultivation, running in strips up the sides of the hills, in a sportsman's eye looked as if the uplands of France (like a horse's leg) had been fired, and gave the prospect a patchy appearance. Agriculturally, I was not pleased; the French farmers, in carts and ploughs, and method of working them, were half a century behind their near neighbours over Channel, and in no way whatever did they make the most of their mother earth. "There's a wood for a woodcock or a fox," "There's a rippling shallow and a likely hole for a good fish," were the words perpetually arising in my mind as the train rattled by the one or the other; and a schoolboy going home for the holidays was not more pleased than I was with all I saw. The train, though, is decidedly slower than the trains in England; but the refreshment-rooms are better, and more time is allowed to eat and drink. All the eatables looked nice; but I did not at all like the use the male cooks or carvers made of their hands in helping me to those cold forced-meat sort of pies. To

prevent the slice falling or breaking as they cut through, they place the palm of their hand against it, which manipulation marred my appetite, changed my mind, and induced me to select some other viand. On, on we went, the light and lively graceful soul of France apparently mingling with my being, and giving me almost a new existence; with boars and wolves the lively background to the exciting picture, a happy traveller, I was whirled among the environs of Paris.

My friend, Monsieur d'Anchald, ever intent on my comfort, had promised me that two of his sons should meet me on my arrival in Paris, to assist me to care for my dogs, and to aid in all matters touching my welfare. So, when the train came to a stand-still in the Paris terminus, I prepared myself for being familiarly accosted by strangers. But no; I had to look to everything myself. No one spoke to me; no one seemed to care for me; and all I remarked was, that a tall soldier-like cuirassier in uniform looked about from beneath his helmet in search of an individual he could not find. Once or twice his eyes in this search fell on me; but, as I suppose I did not look like his mental picture of the man he was to meet, they passed off to the space around or beyond me, till at length his eyes fell on some article of my

luggage, to which was attached my name, when out came a friendly hand and we fraternised. Having promised to go to the Hôtel Byron, Rue Lafitte, and dine with my American companion on the rail (he also was a captain of a merchantman), I accompanied Ludovic d'Anchald to the French Tattersall's, there to put up my hounds: and great fun we had in our closely packed cab—Malwood and his helmet being always in antagonism. The driver a good-humoured Frenchman, if I recollect rightly, would fraternise with my two terriers, and he nursed them on the box. In this state we arrived at the Tattersall's, and, after some little demur (which I did not expect), I placed my quadrupeds in a comfortable loose box, with directions to the man in charge (a civil and attentive groom) to feed them well, on promise of good remuneration, and to have them ready for me at an early hour on the following morning. Ludovic d'Anchald then accompanied me as far as the Hôtel Byron, and left me to my dinner and my bed. I deeply regret to say that his brother could not join him in receiving me, for he was seized with an illness which some weeks after terminated fatally.

"Well, then," I said to myself, "here I am in Paris at the very moment I expected to be; but alas for economy!—the passage-money from Southamp-

ton to Paris is the least item in the cost; my dogs ought, according to the measure of payment, to sit in the first-class saloon on board the ship and railway carriage, and I ought to stuff myself into the hole they call their box." I stared at my purse in astonishment; and well knowing I should not clear Tattersall's under heavy charges, with two hundred miles of railway still to get over, as well as the hire of a cab and my charges at the hotel, I began to fear, as it was then late at night, that I should never replenish my finances in time for the early morning train on the Orleans line, by which Monsieur d'Anchald expected me, and to which train he was to send his carriage to take me to the château.

The consideration of these things annoyed me. I should, in the first place, disappoint my kind friends, and, in the second, lose my Saturday's sport; for, as I expected to arrive at Sauvages for dinner on Friday, Saturday would see me fresh enough for any fun that was forthcoming. Upon an exclamation of "bore" from me (not "boar"), my friend the captain asked what was the matter; and, when I told him, he (with a frankness which I think was flattering to both) immediately asked if I would accept at his hands any sum I wanted, and which I could return to him at my own time on reaching my journey's end. "Yes,"

I cried, "I will, and thankfully; so lend me five twenty-franc pieces, which will, in addition to what I have, be ample for my necessities; and on reaching Sauvages I will return the money through the post." No sooner said than done; the Captain handed over the money, never asked for a line in return, nor even for my address (which I will not insult his good-nature by even supposing he had seen on my luggage); and we bade each other a hearty good-night, with a promise from me that if ever I sought the chase in his country, and wended my way to the prairies, I would communicate with him, and run over to Havre to let him take me to New York.

On the following morning I was up early, breakfasted in my room, very well satisfied with the attention given me, and wrote down, and left with my compliments for the Captain both my English and French address, not a little pleased at my fraternisation with America, and fully convinced that I had stumbled either on a most kind and open-hearted individual, or on one who was but the general type of his countrymen—a specimen, in fact, of the best of the nation to which he belonged. The money I returned to him with all thanks, soon after my arrival at the château. My early breakfast concluded, and the cab having been ordered over-night (the sum

agreed on that I was to give the driver being three francs, for taking me first to the French Tattersall's to pick up my hounds, and then to the station of the Orleans line), I listened to the very attentive waiter giving all due directions to the driver, and then lost myself in a look at Paris, and in admiration of the splendid city. Some time after my departure from the hotel, I started from my reverie at the length of time it seemed to take to reach Tattersall's, and then I became convinced that I was passing through places that I had never passed before.

"Stop!" I cried to the coachman, "stop."

He pulled at the reins, on which were sleeping two white ponies, who had got into such a habit of leaning somnambulist fashion on their bits, that their mouths extended in long narrow slits up to their eyes; but the pull was understood by them to mean more haste, so they toddled on faster, instead of stopping.

"Stop!" I cried again, with something very like a French oath, and the man slackened his reins to turn to me, and finding that their heads were let go, the ponies stood still.

"Where are you going?"

"To the Orleans station; it is close here!"

"Oh!" I cried, my funny French encrusted, I fear, with bitter objurgation, "you sleepy fool; you

were ordered to drive first to the French Tattersall's, and then to the Orleans station, and your thick head has reversed the mission. Turn about and gallop to the French Tattersall's, and if you don't get there and back in time for the train, I will deliver you over to the pains and penalties of the condemned, and not a centime shall you have from me."

Oh, that there had been a priest at hand of the severest Jesuitical order, just to have heard the string of demoniac expressions which then rang from the recently awakened lips of this Roman Catholic as he "yawed" round the heavy heads attached to the living skins within his harness, and turned my vehicle the other way! For a moment, the two white galloways hobbled a little faster; but, as that was a momentary agony, and they soon relapsed again into a snail-like hobble, my "quick and quicker" again resounded, and again called forth the impious vocabulary of the French driver. The market people stared at us; the decent foot-passengers were amused (a Frenchman is too civil to laugh at the obvious distress of a foreigner); and fusty, snuffy, old gentlemen peering into musty old books along the wall overhanging the river by the bridge, looked up as if stricken by an electric shock. At last, time hung so heavily, and my vehicle got so slow,

that, on seeing a gentlemanly passenger on the pavement meeting us, I peremptorily ordered a halt, let myself out of the carriage, and in very odd French asked the gentleman, where I was going to, — at least that was the meaning of the words I used. With a suppressed smile, my civil friend replied in substance, "that it was impossible for him to know!" So in an instant, seeing the oddity of my question, and laughing at it, I added a word or two, and asked him where that turn led, and if that was the way to the French Tattersall's. He told me that it was all correct, and that the place I sought was further on and to the right.

"Thanks, sir," I said; "then will you direct the driver of my carriage?"

At this request he stepped up to the driver, and after a few words, told me with a good-humoured smile that the coachman said he knew very well where he was going, if I would only have the patience to let him get there. Having bowed to each other, with many thanks from me, I saw him stop to see that we took the right direction. At last I gained Tattersall's and received my hounds, and by dint of threats and commands for speed, was put down at the Orleans station, in time for the desired train.

On getting out of the cab, my coachman declined

to take the three francs agreed upon, and, on my refusing to give him more, he seized my cloak in lieu of the money. Now it happened that I had an immense affection for that old cloak. I had it when in the Coldstream Guards; and after that it had sheltered me and my white charger when in command of a picked squadron of yeomanry. It had protected too, in cases of emergency, from land as well as seabreezes, the fairest of the fair; and to have a rude and dirty hand in violence upon it was more than I could very well bear. A crowd of blackguards looked delighted when the cabman seized it; but their approbation suddenly changed to my side, when I said, "If you don't let go, I'll hit your head." Something looked as if it was about to follow these words, so my coachman loosened his hold, and fled out of arm's reach (alas! I knew nothing of what a blow might cost me then); so, laughing at his terror, I further established myself in the good will of the cads, by calling the discomfited hero back and tossing him a franc, on the stipulated condition that he would use his horses well.

And now for my ticket from Paris to Nevers, and for the old château of my friend, M. d'Anchald.

CHAP. III.

"If our discretion tells us how to live,
We need no ghost a helping hand to give;
But if discretion cannot us restrain,
It then appears a ghost would come in vain."

Crabbe.

Among others, there is one very great error in the French management of railway traffic. Anything which causes confusion and delay to the traveller ought to be avoided, and all unnecessary complication in machinery of every description set aside. In France there are different offices for the payment of different things belonging to one and the same passenger—in England one office and one payment suffices for them all. At the Orleans station first I had to pay at one window for my own ticket, at a second for my dogs, and at a third for an over-weight of luggage. In addition to this, the luggage is separated from its owner, and the owner has not the chance to see that it is duly put into the van and none of it left behind.

Although the porters on the French rail are professedly forbidden to demand money, there is not one in fifty of them that does not dun the English traveller for reward almost for the mere reply as to where he is to take his ticket. When these fellows were attentive and careful of my dogs, I gave them something; but when they demanded money, as they generally did, for taking my luggage from the cab to the railway office, I invariably refused it.

At the Orleans station one of these men demanded money at the very office window while I was taking the ticket either for my dogs or for the extra weight of luggage, I forget which; and, on my giving him a few sous, he complained that it was not enough. On this I immediately reported him to the official ticket-taker in the office, who shook his head at him and laughed, when he returned the sous, and again said they were not enough. I took them back and told him if he wished to follow up his suit for more he must apply to the king of the infernal regions, as, having refused the sous from me, he would then get nothing. Fortunately for me, at the Orleans station there was a French lady who understood and spoke English fluently, and with the greatest possible kindness she came up and offered her services in the shape of interpreter between me and the officials.

Even in her presence the porters craved money, when she told me I had better submit to the imposition than run the risk of having some of my parcels purposely left behind; I therefore gave two or three of them a trifle rather than be put to any inconvenience. This is not as it should be, and not in accordance with the courtesy shown to Frenchmen when travelling on an English line. Not one of our porters dare attempt such an imposition; and I am fully convinced if such a demand reached the ears of an Englishman on the spot, he would report the offender, and at once obtain his discharge. The same lady, who thus so good-naturedly gave me her attention, informed me that she was requested to ask if I would sell any or all of my dogs, when I replied that none of them could be disposed of, but if she herself desired either a terrier or a bloodhound, the first time I had one to spare, the same, without purchase should be laid at her feet. She gave me her address; and I will not forget my promise.

At this station I had the pleasure of seeing the Marshal Pelissier, Duke de Malakoff, who travelled by the same train; when, instead of beholding a form resembling the delineation of Punch, as "our special correspondents" were so fond of painting him, I beheld a short, square, thickset, hale and hearty

man, with not much waist certainly, but at the same time not possessed of stomach sufficient "to prevent his sitting on horseback." He trod the platform with a quick, firm, soldierlike step; and my belief is, that in a wrestle he would kick up the heels of some of the English "gentlemen of the press" who used to be so fond of holding him up to ridicule.

At last, my hounds in their box, or dog's hole (an improvement, though, on the English holes), and my luggage stowed away, I found myself again progressing towards Nevers—a gentleman and a lady, and one other gentleman, my travelling companions. Though smoking in a carriage, I believe, is professedly prohibited in France, as it is in England, both these gentlemen made themselves horribly disagreeable by puffing at their cigars; when, as I thought it not worth while for the nonce to turn myself into a tobacco-stopper, I bore the infernal fumigation with great good-humour, seeing, too, that the lady (though I thought I read a look of disgust in her features when she accorded permission to smoke) did not openly object to it. Somehow or other we got into an indistinct interchange of ideas, the sight of Malwood having induced some sporting conclusions; when one of the gentlemen, to show me that he knew what Malwood was for, failing to make

himself verbally intelligible, got down on his hands and knees, stooped his head, as if to a scent, and then flung it up and bellowed, to the infinite mirth of the lady as well as of myself and the other gentlemen. He then resorted to my pocket-book, and drew the animals of chase, and one way or other we got on very well.

To get from the main line to Nevers I had to clear out to a branch line at a station called Guétin; and while on the platform collecting my luggage, a firm friendly grasp was laid on my shoulder, and M. d'Anchald welcomed me most heartily to France. From Guétin we proceeded to Nevers, arriving there at half-past six in the afternoon, and from the station to the Hôtel de France, where the carriage to take us to the château was in waiting. A very tempting dinner-bell, summoning to the table d'hôte, was ringing when we arrived at the hotel, and M. d'Anchald advised me to have some dinner; but, having lunched at one of the stations, and not feeling at the moment hungry, I declined, with a grateful idea of dinner about half-past eight at the château. Alas! I did not then know the French estimation of distance. The two hours' drive I expected, under the most favourable circumstances would have been four; but as we had some delays in Nevers on account of one

thing and another, and a wheel chose to get into a very lively state of fire instead of locomotion, it was after two o'clock in the morning before the hospitable château received us under its ample roof.

As soon as we reached the precincts of the forest, my eyes were straining from the carriage-window into its deep dark depths, and wondering, as the white stems of the aspen and ash stood out in the light of the lamps from the impervious background, if a boar or wolf had ever passed under the boughs and stems I saw! At one spot, as we neared the château, M. d'Anchald heightened the interest I felt by telling me there was a litter of wolves hard by; for one of his people, who were on the look-out, had found their "larder" with the remains of a horse in it, and, while this man was searching for signs of the using of wolves, he had put up a band of ten wild boars.

I must not forget to mention the two white mares which drew the carriage—one of them, for heavy power and shape, the cleverest creature of the sort I ever saw. She had the immense power of an English dray-horse, while at the same time she could trot lightly and well in a barouche, and was symmetry itself to look at. The other mare was immensely powerful and clever, but not so handsome.

On entering the château, forming the rug of the

fireplace in the dining-room, I saw a very well-preserved old wolf's skin, gray and completely tawny with age, as to which my friend, as a sort of seasoning to our late (or rather early) repast that morning, related to me the following legend: —

This old wolf had been known for years in the forest around the château, and had been frequently hunted, and as often escaped. Once, when he was closely pursued, M. d'Anchald viewed him run into the midst of a flock of sheep, and, though he kept his eye on the flock, he never saw the wolf leave it. On the other sportsmen with the hounds coming up, they surrounded and advanced on the sheep, supposing that the wolf was hidden among them; but, after the most minute search the wolf could not be found, and what was to them still more extraordinary, the hounds could never hit upon him again.

From what I have since seen of the French chase and method of hunting, I could account for the latter fact without the aid of one unearthly suspicion. So often and so oddly had this old wolf eluded his pursuers, that people began to think that it was not a wolf even in sheep's clothing, but a devil in a wolf's skin, and, without some especial aid from St. Hubert, the huntsmen despaired of a victory. Grown bolder with age and impunity, and desperate too from infir-

mity, this old wolf began to seek his food in broad daylight, and, when the sheep were feeding anywhere near the woods, he would suddenly appear and chase them for a dinner.

It is the custom, in those cultivated valleys between the woodlands, to send a little girl out in charge of the sheep. One day the old wolf made his usual sortie on the flock; but as the French sheep are better calculated for running than roasting, and every hour at the wolf's age made him slower, he failed to catch his mutton, when, in a state of purblind excitement and famine, he seized and killed the only creature not fast enough to escape, and devoured the little girl. A second time he committed a similar outrage; when, on the alarm reaching the village, and the peasants sallying forth in force, as he retreated from the remains of the poor creature he had killed and partly eaten, the villagers thought, from the way he ran against a portion of the wood, that he was blind.

For a time nothing more was heard of him; but he again suddenly appeared in a raid upon the sheep, and, failing to catch one, he, in a third instance, killed a little girl in attendance on them, and had devoured one of her thighs when the villagers came and drove him away. As they bore the poor girl's body to the cottage of mourning, a great quantity of

blood flowed from the arteries of the torn limb, and dropped upon the road, and on the threshold of the door whence the poor child but a few hours before had passed in all the health and vivacity of youth.

As is the custom, during the night an old woman sat up with the corpse; when, in the very witching hour "when churchyards yawn and graves give up their dead," while the rest of the villagers were buried in repose, the night pitch dark and airless, as if nature feared yet listened for an approaching thunderstorm, the old woman was roused from her lonely vigil over the dead by a sullen but approaching sound, as of the long heavy gallop of some large animal coming down the road straight to the cottage-door. Stride by stride, more audibly and nearer it came; the old woman in a frenzy of terror, rose as the result became evident, and as she rose some creature rushed against the portal with a blow like that of a sledge-hammer, shook the door from latch and lock to its very foundation, and then seemed to fall back from the force of the concussion. More dead than alive, the old woman then heard what seemed to her a low growl or moan of pain and disappointment, and a heavy, slow, and perhaps limping, trotting footfall, as the creature retreated in the direction whence it had arrived. In the morning the pad of

the wolf was detected up to the cottage-door; he was blind, and at night, on returning to the spot whence he had been forced from his repast on the little girl, he had discovered and hunted up the traces of her blood, and in his blind pursuit came rushing down the road, till his course was thwarted by the cottage-door. So great had become the terror occasioned by this old wolf, and I regret to say so inefficient were the legitimate means of hunting him, that an extra reward was offered for his head; when at last, the moon being bright and high, a dead horse was placed in the forest to attract him, and a man in a tree above it with a gun. The first night nothing was seen of the old wolf; but on the second the temptation to the blind and famished animal was too strong. He came to the bait, and while tearing at the flesh with the jaw of "starvation," a bullet avenged his murderous deeds, and thus ingloriously he fell dead. How I looked at this venerable and venerated skin, and hoped that the owner of it, now no more, had left an infinity of sons and daughters, every one of whom had also innumerable pledges of loupish felicity; and with a hearty good wish for the prosperity and fecundity of the larger game, I bade my hospitable friends good night, or rather good morning, and retired to my chamber, in which I found all that could refresh a traveller, or add to his comfort and contentment.

CHAP. IV.

"Forget thee! if to dream by night and muse on thee by day,
If all the worship deep and wild a poet's heart can pay,
If prayers in absence breath'd for thee to Heav'n's protecting power,
If winged thoughts that flit to thee, a thousand in an hour,
If busy fancy blending thee with all my future lot,
If this thou call'st 'forgetting,' thou, indeed, shalt be forgot!"

Moultrie.

It was late that morning when I opened my eyes, and at first could not realise where I was; but after a rub or two at my forehead, consciousness returned, and I felt myself at the château in the French forests. With a swing I leapt from my bed, and, entering the recess of the window caused by the thickness of the walls, I threw the casement open, and inhaled as sweet a sigh, from as sunny a morn, as ever a sportsman revelled in. Beneath my window was a terrace, whence arose to my delighted senses the aroma of mignonette and other flowers, while below its wall were splendid meadows, as green and rich as those beneath the battlements of Berkeley Castle, filled with white cattle. Beyond the meadows the undulating ground arose in some arable land,

abutting the edge of the luxuriant wild, or copsewood forest. Oh! what a balmy, easily breathed, and invigorating air; how soft the sky, and how green the fields and woods. I looked on them all with a heartfelt veneration; and if I wished for eyes that were far away, and thought on hours which I had shared with them in beautiful prospects something like the one now before me, *that* did not enervate the sportsman's arm, nor render me less anxious to bring a boar to bay.

The meadows I gazed on, in olden times had been an immense lake, I suppose of nearly two or three hundred acres of water, and had formed the defence on one side of the château, its waters being carried round on the other side by a ditch, protected at the flanks by towers. From the cellars of the château I subsequently ascertained that a subterranean passage extended a considerable distance, opening out into the dense forest, but at this time unexplored on account of malaria and other impediments. "Oh why," I once upon a time exclaimed to my friend M. d'Anchald, "did you not keep up the lake, for the sake of the wild swans, and all the varieties of fowl and fish upon and within it?"

"The bullocks are better," was his reply; "a bullock to an acre is better than the ducks." And

in one sense of the word, of course, I could offer no contradiction.

Having luxuriated in the air and prospect for some moments, I surveyed my room. In addition to all the comforts of an English bedroom, by the side of my bed, and in especial compliment to my known devotion to St. Hubert, lay the beautifully preserved skin of a huge wolf, the head and open jaws containing the teeth, admirably stuffed and retained, and the edge of the skin surrounded with crimson cloth. What a fit accompaniment this trophy was for the luggage that lay around it! The moment I was dressed and waiting for a summons to a very late breakfast, I unpacked my things and arranged them ready to my hand; and scarcely had I done so when my hearty host entered and gave me, as an Irishman would say, the "top of the morning."

From the late hour at which we had gone to bed, and the consequent delay in the morning appearance, it was decided only to draw that portion of the river near the château for an otter — report, as usual, asserting that the banks were haunted by the young and old of the animals in question. Having no shafts that would fit my spear-heads we resolved to take our guns to give the otter the *coup de grâce;* so, sticking my straight English hunting-horn into my

belt, accompanied by mine host and his two sons, Jules and Maurice, we proceeded to inspect the kennel of hounds, whence I desired to select the two couple of old steady foxhound bitches I had procured for M. d'Anchald from my old servant George Carter, Mr. Assheton Smith's huntsman, and which, some of them, were descended from my foxhound Harrogate.

The kennel, adjoining the château, consisting of a lodging-house and yard, was to that extent perfection itself, with plenty of clean wheat-straw on the bedstead — site, aspect, and all, it could not be amended; "but" (how I hate that much-conveying monosyllable!) in that kennel I beheld about seventeen hounds, in every possible and impossible stage of disease and incapability, and not above two or three among them that even looked fit to follow an animal of chase. There tottered Saxon — the great, able young bloodhound, in the prime of life, who, single-handed, had often hunted down, in runs of from two to four hours' duration, the wild New Forest deer, and whom I had sold to M. d'Anchald in the previous spring — scarce able to sustain himself, nor possessed of energy enough to know me; as thin as a whipping-post, as hollow in his coat as a "French hen," and nearly blind from the yellow matter accumulated in the corners of his eyes.

"What on earth is the matter with Saxon?" I exclaimed.

"Nothing;" was the reply.

"Nothing! Why, he is dying, and so are three parts of the hounds. All are skeletons, save one or two, who are as fat as prize pigs; all are more or less eaten up with the mange, and even the best-looking are in no condition. What makes the most of them so thin?"

"I don't know: they eat what they like."

"What makes that one so fat?"

"I don't know: he has the same chance as the others."

"How do you feed them?"

"We let them all in together."

"Good Heaven! What do you let them eat?"

"Barley bread, soaked in hot water."

"No flesh?"

"Oh yes, sometimes."

"Well, the hounds are dying: how do you account for it?"

"Oh, perhaps some very hot weather. We took them out the other day to an attack of young wolves, and, after a time, they all lay down; and they have looked bad ever since."

Reader, dear brother huntsman, will you believe it,

that these poor hounds had lain cooped up in their kennel *from March till the end of August*, and *then, without any previous exercise* or trot on the roads, or rule as to the quantity of fat they carried, and not having had any meat, they were taken out into the severest and best-scenting woods imaginable, and put to hunt cub wolves, in a climate warmer than that of England and on a very hot day? Well might they tire and lie down; well might they look ill from low fever induced by such unwonted exertion; all I wonder at is, that they contrived to hunt a brace of cub wolves to their death, and that Mr. Assheton Smith's old Blossom had capabilities sufficient in her to overtake and get punished by the old vixen wolf. I wonder that these hounds did not all fall off in fits, die at once, or go mad; and I ceased to marvel so much at the complicated nature of the diseases by which they were more or less oppressed.

The seventeen hounds that were there collected consisted of about five or six French hounds, some rough and some smooth, and one was a little harrier; to these were added my great able-bodied bloodhound Saxon, who stood nearly 25 inches high, and several full-sized foxhounds, old and young, one of them a clever dog hound called "Windsor," from her Majesty's kennel at Ascot Heath, but who was

down of two toes, and therefore, as far as speed and endurance went, done for. All the French hounds, except one old rascal called Musto, or some name like it, were either cripples or attenuated worn-out skeletons, save one powerless dog, liver coloured and white, with a stump tail, for it could not be called a stern. He was in fair flesh, though very mangy, but without exception as powerless, ill-grown, and ugly a thing as ever ran on four bad legs; I think they called him Papajeau. Out of this strange collection I had to choose two couple of steady old foxhounds, the more recently imported from England the better, and I asked to be shown those purchased from George Carter. Only two of these were fit to go, Blossom and one other; so I had to take two able young foxhound bitches.

Wishing to make my otter pack up to three couple, I then asked them to point out to me a couple of their surest, most truthful, and steadiest hounds, on whom they could rely; when they selected one of the old worn-out black-pied French hounds, and a smooth French dog, who looked to have in him a cross of the harrier. Both were old, each was hideous, and I saw that neither could run a yard; but, as they were recommended to me by my friends as remarkable for truth and steadiness, I accepted their services,

and with these three couple of hounds and my two terriers we started for the river. They were about to couple their hounds up; but, not conceiving that such a thing could be needful, I discarded couples for the hounds of my choice, and in amazement viewed them chain the old worn-out cripples.

At the place where we were to commence, there were barns and a cottage standing on the banks of the river, close to the château—the path by the door of the cottage used only by men, women, and children, and joining the high road. As this led immediately to the brook, I bade them uncouple the two French hounds, which request was complied with, and, about half-past two o'clock P.M., on the most frequented thoroughfare, to my horror, the old smooth French dog put down his nose as if feeling a scent, and started in full cry along the beaten path, the other French animal looking at him and doing the same—Blossom and the English hounds, as well as my terriers staring at them in mystified astonishment.

"For heaven's sake," I said, "take up those two old false cripples, those babblers."

"Babblers! what is that?"

"Why, devils who kick up an infernal clatter without scent before them."

"Oh, no; they don't do that. Something has been there in the night."

"Something there in the night! Yes, and in the day too,—rats, cows, chickens, and children; but not an animal of chase. Take them up, or I cannot attempt to hunt an otter."

By this time these false old villains had disturbed their industrious fleas, and had sat down to scratch in silence. So the rejoinder made to me was:

"Oh those hounds spoke from excitement, on being just let out of their couples; they won't do it again."

"Won't they?" I replied; "I know better; I have seen quite enough to be well aware that the fault of babbling, or telling lies, is a systematic one with them; but seeing is believing, and you shall convince yourselves."

By this time I had reached the bushes on the bank of the stream, when gently, and in an under tone of voice, I encouraged old Blossom and my terriers to draw. Scarce a word had passed my lips, when off set the two old liars again in full cry; so I insisted on their return home — when one of my kind friends humoured me and returned them to their kennel.

We then commenced to draw steadily and well, except that Master Nip bowled into a young duck, but without the touch of an otter. The otters had been there, for on the banks in the grass, and on an occasional old stump of a tree, there were the

"sprainting" places frequent, but very stale; so, having drawn down the river as far as we could go with daylight before us without finding, we were about to return home, when the voice of a distant horn reached us from the depths of the forest. I thought that I heard a confused tune played afar off, and deemed it some musician disporting himself windily to the woods; but my friends were much occupied with it, and at last told me that it was a hunter (who had heard my horn recalling a hound who had drawn away from the river) appealing to me for aid, and telling me by his horn that his wolf was beaten, his horse tired, and that, in that position he could not kill his animal of chase; and therefore, hearing my horn, he called on his brother huntsman to make in and assist him. While listening to this sylvan summons, we occasionally heard the baying of a hound; but, as we were all on foot, we could in no way make in, so the wolf escaped.

While thus drawing the Nièvre for an otter, I was struck with its swift shallows and deep dark holes, and eddying pools beneath the alders, and, being assured that there were pike and perch in the river, I mentally resolved that on the first idle day I would haunt the banks of the stream with a live minnow for perch, and a good paternoster, such as is used

in the Thames, with two hooks to lie at the bottom. What a pretty little valley it is through which this river flows, winding its course, a green meadow on either side, with the dark copse-wood of the forest fringing the upland as if shutting out the noisy world. The approximation to the woodland forms one of the difficulties to otter-hunting; with old fox-hounds unused to the amphibious sport, they think that you are mistaken in holding them along the river banks, and very naturally keep away for the higher and dryer lying. Otter-hunting then proved a blank, as it always does unless you have a whole day before you; so we returned to the château, all the better for our walk, with appetites quite prepared for dinner.

On the next day, Sunday (and a very rainy Sabbath it was), I again repaired to the kennel deeply anxious at least to do something for my friend's hounds, and to put them in a better condition. Alas! we huntsmen of England too well know how long it takes to put a hound in sufficiently good trim to run down a wild animal; and, once let a pack become a prey to ill health and complicated disease, all possible exercise with the best food in the world will not avail them until medical treatment has restored each functional disarrangement, and left a

clean basis on which to build the breadth of muscle so necessary to speed and endurance. Again I stood in that well-built kennel-yard, and tried to discover what ailed the hounds; and the more I studied them the more was I confounded. In short, all the diseases I had ever known in the whole course of my experience seemed to have run into each other, and fastened on this devoted kennel.

"Ha! here's a hound dying," I exclaimed, on seeing a head, neck, and shoulders struggling in the straw. "Oh, no, it isn't; it's the half of a hound alive. I say, my good friends, what do you keep this poor old cripple for?"

For the benefit of the object I have in view, I will describe him. A wild boar had caught him with his tusk, on one of his thighs and on one loin. The entire thigh, on one side, where the tusk struck, was destroyed, nothing but the remains of it left, to the end of which depended a wasted leg and foot. Too short to touch the ground, it was only flourished in the way of accompaniment to locomotion; while the loin was also fallen away, as well as the other hind-leg, the latter scarcely able to support the emaciated frame.

I repeat, "What on earth makes you keep this poor old cripple?"

"To lead up to the boar."

"To *lead!* lead what? Why, he is not fast enough to lead a lame blind man?"

"Oh yes; we put him on the line; he leads up to the boar."

"Leads! What, do you mean to say that those three or four able young foxhounds, and Saxon, when he is in health, *wait* for that thing to lead them?"

"Oh, yes; they would do nothing without him."

"Well," I sighed to myself, "there must be some mistake here of some sort; but let us proceed with the investigation."

"What is that?" I asked, pointing to a long-legged picked-nosed thing, liver-coloured and white, like a pointer; no loins, no power, flat-sided, and horrible in feet and legs, with a stump stern—evidently chopped off.

"That! That is famous old Papajow,"—so it was pronounced.

"What do you keep him for? He can't run up."

"Papajow not run up! He can fly."

On hearing this annunciation, from a sensible young man, I fell back against the wall, and seriously took myself to task. "Here, then," I murmured, "is one of those apparent impossibilities, which, after

all, is no impossibility, but, without any visible means, compasses the very thing we want. That limbless, muscleless, faulty old figure can fly!" Deep in a reverie, I ran over all the angels and cupids, cherubims and seraphims, I had ever seen depicted, as well as the portraits of that well-bearded old gentleman Time, and blamed myself for doubting that any one of them *could* fly, however, favourable their moult, without the additional muscles to put their wings in motion. I regretted too, my wicked assertion that no angel *could* fly unless, like a duck, his wings were located more in the middle of his body. All this harassed and vexed me; still, I felt convinced that, without the aid of a steam-kettle or other artificial contrivance, on one side or the other, Papajow could fly no more than a painter's angel; nor could he run up with Barricade, Bavard, Corbeau, Saxon, and some others.

The pack that I was to work with, then, consisted of several worn-out foxhound bitches, that had become, in England, too slow and too slack to hunt the animal whom they had hitherto vanquished, and whom they could kill; and these were expected, in France, to buckle to the strange scent of the boar and wolf, who, instead of their killing, could kill them, and to commence a new life of extended activity and

daring. To aid these "poor things" were six or seven French hounds, crippled in limb, stinted in action, without power, speed, or endurance, and who, to the disqualifications of frame, numbered in their dishonest but sagacious minds every single fault for which the English huntsman condemns a hound to death, as not only useless in all successful sport, but as the source of all possible faults in the pack that hunts with him. To these add "Windsor," the hound "down of two toes before," and, who, therefore, was disqualified from speed, and Saxon and a few able young foxhounds such as I have before enumerated, and the English huntsman will easily conceive what chance there was in the severest and best scenting copse-wood in the world of such hounds keeping together, or of their hunting down anything that at starting was not crippled by the gun or rifle. I could not help casting a glance at the able active figures of my friends by my side, and thinking that such men were fully capable of making use to the very utmost of far better means.

With a sigh to myself that I should have further errors to look at in the woods, I then told my friend that had I seen his forest before I advised him to buy some old steady foxhound bitches, I should have recommended nothing but the purchase of unentered

hounds, and those not of the largest, but of a moderate but powerful size. Having seen the condition of the pack, I no longer wondered at what my friend told me, that the French hounds wanted energy and stoutness, for that when they tired in the forest and lay down they slept there, without doing as the English hound always did, walking home at once to his kennel. He told me that after hunting a wolf several of the French hounds tired, when, scratching a bed for themselves in the bushes, they went to sleep! the wolf then, having had just enough exercise from the chase they had given him to make him hungry, returned to the line and dined on any single hound he met with so laid up, to the manifest diminution of the pack. Indeed, from what I have seen of the fatness of one or two hounds in every French pack that has come under my notice, if these fat hounds had lain up, the wolf could only have considered it as a gift fatted purposely for "his larder," and therefore in civility as well as out of ferocity he was bound to eat him.

"Well," I said as we left the kennel, "if you will permit me, I will give Saxon and some of the most sickly of these hounds a little alterative medicine; and, as we do not use any of them till Tuesday, when also we need not take out the worst of them, I hope

that they will get a little fresher. Now then let us see your food."

The baked barley-bread (as far as barley-meal is concerned) was excellent; but, alas! there was no flesh; and we in England well know that *without a certain quantity of animal food, no hound can do his duty.* We know, too, that to expect to put hounds in condition on barley-meal, cook it in any way you will, is utterly impossible; and a man might just as well expect to keep his canary bird in feather and song on roast beef and plum-pudding as a hound in hunting trim on such "perilous stuff." Barley-meal to a hound is heating and in every way unhealthy, and in utter antagonism to the support of his constitution.

Having collected any drugs that were at hand and directed others to be sent for, I pronounced a decided opinion that, though the food was unhealthy and impossible to condition, it nevertheless, to my mind, did not fully account for the wasted and miserable state of the hounds; and I prayed Jules d'Anchald to investigate what else was occasionally mixed up with the barley-bread; for I had seen symptoms, by bits of vegetables, of dish-water from the scullery and kitchen of the château. Jules d'Anchald, with a quickness at which in him I was no way surprised,

"took up the running," and he himself at last discovered that the greasy water in which the *outsides* of the copper saucepans were washed, and in which those copper pans lay for a time in soak, was given to the kennel, and mixed as a sort of soup with the barley-bread. Here, then, was a terrible means by which to account for the sickness in the hounds, and orders were forthwith given for its discontinuance. Having prayed a horse to be killed (there were one or two kennel horses in store), I attended to the mixing up of the barley-bread with warm water, and assisted in pounding it very finely in the troughs, desiring that the food might always be given cold. When it was ready, whip in hand, I assumed the kennel door, and, to the astonishment of the old boiler (and, as I afterwards found, to the wrath of a fellow called a huntsman), I drafted the thin hounds and the delicate feeders in first, keeping back the one or two hounds in prize-pig condition to the last. This done, I inquired at what time they fed their hounds the day before hunting, and found that they did so *as late in the day as possible;* and then again — hear it, ye huntsmen of England! — *before they went to hunt in the morning! !*

"Oh, St. Hubert!" I cried, "no wonder the hounds knock up, and lie down to sleep for the wolf to devour

them." And then I prayed my friends to have their hounds thereafter drafted properly in to feed, according to their appetites and condition, and, as long as any of the pack were so infinitely below the mark, to have those thin ones fed morning and evening. On the day previous to hunting, then, all feeding to be over by twelve o'clock; and nothing of any sort to be given to them on the morning of hunting.

Will ye believe it, oh ye English disciples of St. Hubert! when laying down these instructions as a golden rule, I was met by my friends with the words, "Do you think?"

"No," I cried in agony, "I don't think, I have long ceased to think about it; I know you can *catch* nothing, though you *may* shoot it, if you let your hounds go out on full stomachs."

"What should you do without your breakfast?"

"Oh dear, oh dear! Man is not a predatory animal who hunts only when he is hungry, and gorges himself when feeding, unless (as to the latter) when he is an alderman. The nature of the hound is to hunt for a stomachful; and if you outrage all nature's designs you cannot expect to develope the energies of the animal of your use. If you will not learn from me, then learn from that grand principle under which it has been my delight to study—let nature be your

mistress, and study from the very fact. Ye, oh ye misbelievers! have told me of the wolf. You say you used to think it an advantage to find the wolf early in the morning *when he had just gorged himself with prey;* but (there's that terrible little word again), but you gain no advantage by it, for the wolf, on finding himself pursued, and that he must exert speed and endurance, had the sense and the power to throw up his food, and gallop away too empty and too fast and stout for you, with your full-stomached hounds, to catch. Rule your actions then from nature, if not from me, and learn a lesson — albeit a wolf is your preceptor. To-morrow, all well, my boys, we join M. E. Bruneau and M. Lucas and their hounds in an attack on wolves; and oh for strange fun and the break of day!"

CHAP. V.

"There's not an hour
Of day, nor dreaming night, but I am with thee;
There's not a wind but whispers of thy name;
And not a flower that sleeps beneath our moon,
But in it's hue or fragrance tells a tale of thee!
Thou canst not teach me to forget."

On retiring to my chamber for the night I put together one of my large double guns of the 11-gauge, and looked to all my appointments; and they were these:—A hard brown hunting-hat, made by Locke of St. James's-street, decorated with the black curling feather of a black-cock's tail, mixed with a feather or two from the hybrid pheasant, lying close along the brim of the hat, so as not to be too remarkable; my frock coat (with a little breast pocket for a small flat-lying powder-horn and a smaller one still for caps) was of a dark grayish-brown hue, to match the colour of an oak tree as much as possible, and made to particular order by Court of Great Marlborough-street, the collar sitting very close and low, and no

other pockets save the usual one in the skirt for a handkerchief; white pantaloons, which were almost concealed by the skirts of the frock coat meeting my high jackboots; and brown gauntlet gloves, fastening, of course, considerably above the wrist; a pouch-belt, such as is worn in the cavalry, for my cartridges; and also a waistbelt, carrying a straight sheath for my hunting-knife, made with a clasp, and having in it a lancet, tweezers, and picker, each belt of brown leather; my straight hunting-horn stuck in the waistbelt, to the latter of which a little pouch was also added, sufficient to carry some wadding and eight balls. To these equipments, at the request of my friends, I added a French sling for my gun, consisting of a broad belt cast over the right shoulder, to which is added a stiff leathern case for the gun,—the gun hanging down behind the left thigh, after the fashion of a sword. This case is wadded, and made to keep a purchase on the front of the trigger-guard, so that the hammers are not endangered; and when the leather which is at the top of it is tied and secured round the small of the stock, no wet can reach to the inside to damp the powder.

If I go to beautiful France and her perfect woodlands again, as my kind friends have asked me to do, I would not have one leathern belt upon me, and for

this very good reason:—After exertion, on standing still to listen to the chase, which, in a huge forest of this sort, having but few rides in it, must at times be far away, the heaving of a man's chest of course moves the belts around it, and makes them "creak;" and this interferes with many a distant as well as stealthily-approaching sylvan sound, which, fully to comprehend, needs the greatest nicety of detection. I have heard both wolf, boar, and roe-deer approaching me when far ahead of the hounds, and stopping at intervals to listen, not only to the far-off cry behind them, but for any danger which might be in their path, and as to which the wind gave them no advantage; and during these moments I have wished my leathern belts anywhere but on my shoulders, for the smallest interference with my ear prevented my being aware as to which side of me the cautiously-approaching animal inclined. When the woods are thick, and the leaf on, and the ride at which you stand very often not clear for above a couple of feet in breadth, it is of the utmost moment, for a shot, to know on which side of you a glimpse of the animal, as he springs the ride, is likeliest to be afforded.

After I had arranged my equipments, and laid my spurs by the side of my boots, so that all should be

in readiness, I again opened my casement on the still, balmy, star-lit night, and imagined that the sweet warm air that sighed up to me through the flowers was the breath of lips then hushed in far-off, and perhaps, in deep repose. I used to pass many an hour of the night at this casement, the gloom of the landscape inducing me to think that gaunt wolves were prowling about close to me; but still, if as a faithful historian I must confess the truth, my eyes were oftener cast upon the skies to gaze on those constellations that so perpetually seemed a changeless method of communication, wherever I was, between me and all I held most dear.

The next morning, at an early hour, in came the servant François with my hot water and an announcement of the hour. Some amusing scenes used at first to occur between us; for I fear my French, in regard to the laundry and the appellations of dress, &c., was somewhat of the oddest sort. However, in he came, and I was very soon revelling in cold water; and then, fully equipped, I presented myself at the breakfast-table.

A French breakfast-table at a château, when an Englishman sees it for the first time, makes him imagine that the day is reversed in its orgies, and that in the morning he is about to sit down to his dinner.

Cold and hot meats, hot potatoes, bottles of wine, eggs, and bread, but neither toast, breakfast-cakes, tea, nor coffee, at first greet him; after cheese they are brought in. On seeing this plentiful as well as substantial feast, I was obliged to ask my kind friend to let the end of it, as far as I was concerned, come first, for I could not drink wine at breakfast; and this was immediately complied with.

Breakfast being over, "Now then," said my hearty host, advancing to a sideboard, "where is your pocket?"

On making this inquiry, I beheld him take, from among others put ready for my companions, a most efficient pocket hunting-flask filled with cherry brandy. Alas, I had no spare pocket capable of receiving it; so, with a sigh, I suggested that perhaps he could find a crevice for it in a sort of holster I had seen at his saddle.

"Never fear," was the jolly rejoinder; "you shall have some; when you want it, come to me."

In these enormous forests it is quite necessary for a man to bear about with him a trifle to eat and drink, particularly if he is a stranger, for the chase may lead him he knows not whither; and if darkness or a fog should surround him, unless his sagacious horse knows the wilderness and can take him home,

he is very likely to make a night of it under the greenwood tree. There is no *asking* your way.

The fixture for this my first attack on wolves was at a considerable distance from the Château Sauvages; so our horses (none of which I had yet seen) had been sent or ridden on, and the clever white mare came to the door in the open shooting-carriage to take mine host, Jules d'Anchald, and myself.

As soon as we were in the carriage, Jules began instructing me on the points of chase played on the huge French-horn, and, to my utter astonishment, I recognised, in the air appointed for the death of a wild-boar, a pretty little song which a young lady used to sing to me in years gone by. He played a variety of pieces of music, every animal of chase having a separate air assigned him; and it at once occurred to me that, as a French master of hounds would on no account whatever take a huntsman who was not a musician, he would have to seek a servant rather at the opera than in the kennel, or for any superior knowledge the man might have of the science of woodcraft, or the interests of the establishment entrusted to his care. I cast an eye at the little straight horn in my belt, and thought how much lighter that was to carry, and how much more serviceably and quickly I could call my hounds with it,

as well as sufficiently telegraph to my whippers-in and brother sportsmen all that was taking place around me. It was evident at once that this cumbrous musical instrument was more one of amusement to its owner than of aid to the hounds; in short, I began to have a shrewd suspicion (afterwards confirmed) that the hound's or the pack's necessities were the last things thought of, instead of being the paramount consideration of all — and that from one end of the French chase to the other, according to an old English adage, the cart had been put before the horse, instead of behind him.

Jollily enough, and musically enough, we trotted on, over very good roads leading along the little cultivated valleys, the extensive forests crowning the sides of all the uplands, and, where we could catch a view, reaching for miles and miles around us. Not a large tree to be seen in the woods, all copsewood of the most varied, thick, and luxuriant description; the Crown wood cut once in thirty years, and the private property every fifteen years, and all chiefly for the purposes of charcoal.

"Oh, by St. Hubert," I said to myself, "it will be necessary to have a strong body of hounds here, and every one of them a good 'drawer;' for there is no getting to leeward of these woods and giving the

hounds the wind; the place may be full of wild animals, and yet you may miss finding them."

On thinking thus, I gave utterance to my opinion, and received for answer: "Oh no; we always know where they are."

"Well," I said to myself, "live and learn; if I were a huntsman of hounds here, with a good pack of twenty couples, I would not take on myself to say so."

After a pull of some fifteen miles we came to a little roadside public-house, whereat we were to mount our horses. For me there was led out a young mare, small for my weight (14 st. and upwards), but rather clever; I was satisfied with her looks, but she seemed to have said to herself, "Don't you wish you may mount me!" and treated me like a wild beast—snorting at me with one ear down and a hind-leg up, and swerving anywhere rather than bear or hear of my approach, for we blinded her eyes in order that I might steal into the saddle. After spending some time in a vain endeavour to mount her, both in and out of the stable, my friend told me I should ride his horse, Coco, to whom I then directed my attention, and almost swooned with pleasure as I did so. There stood a magnificent English hunter to look at, nearly white in colour, power enough for any weight, sixteen hands

high, and, without any exception, the most perfect head, neck, and eye I had ever seen—a picture in shape and make, with a face full of sagacity, fire, and good temper! I was about to approach him gun in hand, when my friend recommended me to put my gun in the sling, as Coco was not in the habit of having it carried in the hand, and would not like it. Not wishing to carry my gun in the sling, I approached him with it in my hand, slid my foot into the stirrup, seated myself in the saddle, patted his splendid crest, and walked off with him as if we had been acquainted all our lives.

"Well, but put your gun into the sling," my friend continued; "it will only tire your arm, and you can't use it."

"Why not? I never carry my gun in a sling at home with Druid till the chase is done, and perhaps I shall get an unexpected shot. I like for ever to be ready."

"You cannot fire from his back. Coco will not bear it, and you'll go off into the trees."

"Yes, I can fire from his back; and more, to be sure of killing from a horse's back, I would rather be on one like Coco, who had never had a gun fired from him before, than on a horse used to the flash and the report. Coco won't know what I am going to

do; he won't nod his head; and, when the trigger is pulled, he can't occasion me any mischief: it will then be all too late."

"You will go off into the trees."

"Well! we shall see!"

The day on which this fixture had been made by M. E. Brunier, was a sort of hospitable gala-day to his immediate friends; and we and all his hunting acquaintances had been asked to meet him in the forest, and breakfast under the greenwood tree. I do not usually expect much sport on these "breakfast days," whether in England or France; but, all being new to me, I was very happy. We found a table in one of the rides, attended by an English girl, and a better breakfast I never desire to see. Such a cold pike, with an excellent salad, as I scarcely ever tasted. All the French gentlemen were most kind and attentive to me, and inspected my appointments narrowly, my heavy double gun and all.

The breakfast being over, I walked up the ride to where it came out on the high road. Hearing there were to be two packs of hounds united for the attack on wolves, and at first, with the idea of huntsmen and whippers-in in my head, I expected at least to see four mounted men and forty couple of hounds. My brother sportsmen in England will guess my surprise

when I saw but two horses tied to the bushes, and two men seated on the banks smoking short pipes; and hung up fast by the head like rizzened haddocks, or bunches of carrots, and all strung together on one string, nose to nose, and with dejected sterns, were two little lots of hounds, perhaps five couples in one lot, and six or seven couples in the other, tied to two trees. Having walked up to these creatures and inspected their condition, I found some immensely old, and so thin that edgeways you could hardly see them; and some so fat that they were less fitted for wind and speed than a lady's plethoric lapdog. Throughout the two lots, the same bad feet and legs existed as in the instance of the French hounds in the kennel at the château; and I am perfectly convinced, that not only is perfection in limb and action neglected in the breeding of hounds in France, but when growing, or lying idle during the cessation of the hunting season, they are kept so confined that their feet, from disease, get flat and out of shape.

"Why, where are the whippers-in?" I asked of my friend.

"Oh, we don't use them here," was the reply; "our woods are too large."

"That is an odd reason," I thought. "Hounds here must often divide; and if a pack of nine hounds

divide, who is to stop the wrong hounds, and assign the huntsmen enough to keep the line?"

While wondering at the French notions in regard to the hound, and observing that every one of them, except two poor thin-looking things, who evidently would not eat from age and disease, were as full of the morning's food as they could be — one of these creatures yawned, when, it being impossible to shut his mouth again except on one of the noses of his companions, of course he did so, and a fight was the consequence; this at once became general, till all were obliged to bite to defend themselves from being bitten. Their huntsman, loath to put out his pipe, shouted at them from his seat on the bank first; but, finding that that would not do, he took his whip from his shoulder, around which it was slung, and, at a running jump, lit with his jack boots and fixed spurs, with rowels in them like lancets, right into the middle of the struggling and tearing mass of combatants, and whipped them all up as a cook would do cream, till, what with fighting among themselves, the strangulation of their couples, kicks, and blows, the whole thing subsided into quiesence. The man had then some trouble in unravelling the canine puzzle; for every hound was more or less bitten and bleeding, whipped and insanely snappish, and all of them

twisted in impossible knots upon their couples like eels hampered on a night line.

"I hope there will not be another *mêlée*," I sighed; "two more fights and floggings such as this will beat the few hounds we have, without the aid of wolf or boar."

At last, orders were given to proceed to the spot in the forest where the huntsman at break of day was *supposed*, by the aid of a "limier," or sure hound in a line, to have harboured a litter of wolves; and when we halted, of course I expected the hounds to be uncoupled — instead of which, two poor old thin and tottering skeletons were cautiously let go, and with them only one huntsman proceeded to draw a thousand acres of wood, every yard of it the thickest and finest lying for a fox.

When a French huntsman encourages his hounds to draw, he makes a noise just like I have heard our drovers do when driving cattle, thus; "How! how! how! how!" the word four times repeated, and its pronunciation prolonged. Well, this huntsman was soon lost sight of; and though he could be heard a long way off in his imaginary draw, I felt convinced that the two old hounds never went a yard from his heels, or, if they did, it was to lie down and scratch. So seeing the ineffectual search, but hearing the

huntsman's noise, I asked Jules d'Anchald if there was no open valley, or ride, or break in the woods down wind of him, where we could post ourselves for the chance of seeing the wolf disturbed, and giving a holloa. He shook his head, and replied, "No;" so I had nothing to do but to remain idly where I was, and interchange inspection of guns, with the poachers in blouses, and game bags; and thus introduce myself to the knowledge of every sort of French firearm under the sun, double and single, shot-gun, rifle, and carbine. These men always attend in large numbers on an attack of wolves, for the chance of getting the reward, if they kill a wolf, paid by Government for his head; and a right jolly set of good-humoured fellows they are.

Having spent a vast deal of time listening to this abortive draw, and got up a conversation with an Abbé in his long black cassock and a double gun slung over his shoulder, I suppose on the vulgate principle that "Leo devorans semper percutiatur," M. Lucas sounded a sonorous recall, and the huntsman and his two old hounds came out of cover — he having, by his false report of the presence of wolves, made what, in French venerie, is termed a "hollow bush"—in English, a cover with nothing in it.

A long conversation then took place, the upshot of

which was, as translated by M. d'Anchald, that it was settled as perfectly certain, on the faith of the trusted *limier*, that there were neither wolves nor wild boars anywhere in this part of the forest; therefore, as M. Lucas permitted his hounds to hunt nothing but those animals, they would be sent home. M. E. Brunier, however, being most kindly anxious to afford me some sport, resolved to draw for a roe-deer.

While this conversation had been going on, I had said to Jules d'Anchald, "Now, I will tell you what, my dear fellow: there is so much thick lying in these woodlands, that, supposing you had them wild in France, elephants, rhinoceroses, hippopotami, giraffes, elands, lions, tigers, leopards, ourang-outangs, wolves, and boars, might at this moment be lying within a few hundred yards of us, winking at us with thumbs, if they had them, to their noses, and in derision, for all that huntsman and his two old useless hounds would know of the matter. Now, then, get the seven or eight hounds we have, uncoupled, and we'll soon have up something!"

This was done; and reader! will you believe me, we had not commenced drawing five minutes, and had not got three hundred yards from where it was pronounced, on the faith of the huntsman and the

limier, that neither wolf nor boar could be anywhere near, when our little pack were in full cry — and a jolly good cry too. Right or wrong, scent or no scent, French hounds always make a row, and they have twice the tongue, in strength and repetition, of an English foxhound. The men in blouses, with eager faces, ran up the rides in all directions, and stationed themselves like spring-guns, to go off at anything that ran against them — an occasional gun exploding by accident, and the ball or slug out of it whistling close to your ear. The gentlemen listened, apparently in doubt as to whether the hounds were running anything or nothing! The horns were all silent, and not a cheer was heard; still, allowing for a vast deal of babbling, the cry seemed to *me* to be so continuous and regular in its varying direction, that I felt convinced the hounds were in chase of *something alive.*

"Well," I exclaimed to Jules d'Anchald, whom I met in a ride; "it may be a rabbit or it may be a boar; what is it?"

"I don't know; probably a hare."

"I don't think so," I said; "it's something more;" so, giving dear Coco his head, I galloped up a ride, with my ear on the hounds and which way they were coming; when, on finding a narrow path which appeared to be sufficiently untenanted to afford me space

for a shot, I turned Coco obliquely away, so as to open my left side for use, and sat prepared.

A fox dashed across, and I fired, Coco not even shaking his head nor moving; and, assuring Jules d'Anchald, who came up, that I thought the fox was dead in the cover — for, like a rabbit, I had to shoot where he would be, and not at him where he was — I dismounted to reload, and subsequently heard I had killed him.

"It is not my fox they are after," I soon said to myself, as I rammed a pellet over the powder; "the hounds have turned the other way."

All at once — by Jove, what a stir it made among us!—a huge horn began playing a lively air, which to me did not convey much, but which, in regard to M. d'Anchald, put "life and mettle in his heels." Up he came at a gallop.

"Load with ball!" he shouted. "Hear the horn; it is a boar."

And now I found the want of a gun that loaded at the breech, like those of my French companions. One cartridge had to be drawn, and that, as we all know, takes some time; still the boar was headed in all directions, and shot at two or three times; and, before he quitted the quarter of the wood where we found him, I had loaded with ball, and was again in the

saddle—old Coco splendidly anxious, free as the wind, with a mouth soft enough for the hand of a child. Here, there, and everywhere, I "cheeked" the cry, and tried to view the boar for a shot, but in vain! at last he slipped through the line of guns, made his point, and went straight away, leaving all those on foot far and far behind, so that the mounted gentlemen had it all to themselves.

In passing one of my companions in a ride, he cried out to me, "The boar is wounded; it is all right;" but the boar paid, for the present, no more attention to the bullet and a handful of slugs *that were in his stomach* than he would have cared for an acorn that had got there by legitimate means.

And now, as I expected, the pace with such a scent as that left by a stricken wild boar, and in such a scenting woodland, began to tell on the few ill-matched, ill-conditioned hounds; and several times they crossed me in the rides, one leading hound two hundred yards ahead, and the others following at long intervals, but all in full cry, and each hound doubling his tongue and making noise enough for a whole pack. Luckily, the boar ran very straight, so that it was evident to me where the head of the chase existed. At the end of, I think, nearly two hours the horsemen began to get few and far between;

when, coming down from three different directions, D'Anchald, the huntsman, and myself met; a few hurried words, and my friend translated to me that the huntsman had just viewed the boar, bleeding and dead beat, the hounds getting together as he began to dwell, and close at him. Just then there was an extraordinary cessation in the cry for which even the huntsman could not account, and he said he thought the boar was dead. All at once it awoke again, and further from us than we expected, and again we severed each according to his own opinion.

In galloping up a ride, I soon after passed a huge horn in the middle of it, and a gun-sling, at which Coco shied, and then the huntsman's horse tied to a tree. A little further on M. Brunier and M. d'Anchald both dismounted and prepared for a shot, each of whom cried out to me that that was the point for which the boar would make, and I had better dismount and be ready. I listened again when, hearing a renewed and thickened cry, as if all our hounds had got together, evidently turning very short, and from us, I galloped off to get nearer if I could to my work, when in a few moments my ear revelled in approaching sounds. I got near enough fully to distinguish that the cry was fierce and sullen, not that of hounds in chase, but of hounds that bayed an

animal and fought occasionally at his head. Still it did not stop; but every now and then I could distinctly hear the rush of the boar in his charge, and the cry of some hound in anticipation of a wound, or really knocked over. Waiting in expectation that the boar would stop and turn to bay, when the cry came in the thick cover to within forty yards of me I heard the boar scream, and in an instant my leg was thrown over the saddle, and, hanging dear old Coco's bridle to a tree, I made in, not aware that there was any other soul near. As I was forcing my way up to the sounds of fight, and when within ten yards of the place, bang bang went two guns exactly opposite to me, and then there was a cessation of all noise, while with a rush I came full upon the dead boar.

M. Brunier's two servants had made in from an opposite side unknown to me, and had fired on the stricken boar, whom the hounds themselves had pulled down, exhausted from two gun-shots he had received, the first in the body, and the second from M. Brunier, who at a long distance had broken a hinder leg.

The men, one of them the huntsman, apologised for giving the *coup de grâce*, not knowing that I was so close at hand. Having pulled the boar into the

ride, the hounds were made to worry his head a little, but not half enough, and then the pad was dismembered and formally presented to me, as the first gentleman up, for which, of course, I presented the huntsman with a silver fee.

On casting my eye over the hounds, though they made cry enough for twenty couple, I could only count five individuals; another or two came up when the boar was dead.

M. Brunier then invited us, as we passed his house on our road to our carriage, to stop and dine, saying he would stable our horses for the night, they had had a long day, and forward us to our carriage in one of his. Of course I was too happy to do as my friends did, and to make the work as easy as possible to my dear old horse; and this delay enabled me to see a French huntsman dress his boar.

Anybody who has seen a clever English forester or park-keeper dress a deer well, knows that it is a pretty sight, and of course I expected to see something like it. Alas! I was grievously disappointed. Instead of hanging the boar up by the hocks, securing the swallow and fastening the gut, and then in a mass removing all from within that was not good to eat, they flung the boar on a table, and cut him open in that dirty and slovenly way, removing the skin when

in the same position, and making about as filthy a dressing and dismembering of a carcase as can well be imagined, the joints being severed at once, and when the animal was warm. The boar ought to have been, as the Scotch say, "grullocked," or disembowelled, on the spot where he was killed, and the hounds blooded or rewarded with his entrails. But, as I have before remarked, the last thing that enters a French huntsman's head is the requirements of the hounds.

We were a long time waiting for dinner, as the party was a very large one, as well as unexpected; but at last it was set before us with the kindest profusion and hospitality, and done ample justice to. Dinner being over, and the carriage ordered, I strolled forth into the sweet, fresh, silent night, and leaning over a gate, set my eyes on the deep dense forest and my heart on a scene in England. There above me, still in the clear blue heaven, were the same constellations, that on a summer's night had elsewhere, and so lately yet so far away, looked down on me when intensely happy. Though I had changed my situation by hundreds of miles by sea and land, there were those same bright stars exactly in the same spot immediately over my head, as if to teach the soul it cannot wander from the sight of Heaven. Those

sweet, mild, warm, and balmy airs of France, so full of gentleness and love!—may no more scenes of violence and blood distract the towns and cities around which they breathe, nor scare nor trample down the forests, woods, and flowers through which they whisper, oh so gracefully, and well! A huntsman, stranger—once a foe to France, but now, he trusts, for evermore her friend, his nation's prejudice forgotten—puts up a prayer for her prosperity.

Hark! the carriage is driving to the door—my hearty friends are calling for me—when, with a kind adieu to our hospitable open-hearted entertainers, we rattle off, and are soon put down at the little inn where abide our fine white mare and little open carriage. At length, and late at night and very sleepy, I stretch in my ample comfortable bed at the château, falling off into a grateful oblivion so refreshing to mind and body.

CHAP. VI.

"When Bishop Berkeley said, 'there was no matter,'
And proved it — 'twas no matter what he said.
They say his system 'tis in vain to batter,
Too subtle for the airiest human head;
And yet who can believe it? I would shatter
Gladly all matters down to stone or lead,
Or adamant, to find the world a spirit,
And wear my head, denying that I wear it."

Byron.

On the following morning, when François came in to call me, he uttered an exclamation of surprise at the state of my room, when on looking over the side of my pillow, I beheld, on the floor by my boots, as many oak-leaves as would make a forcing-bed for a little hothouse — the said boots, from coming up only to the knee, having been filled with them as Coco rushed through the narrow paths of the overhanging copse, or forced his way through the young spring. Hunting boots for such a woodland as this, and for leaves as well as dew or rain, ought to come quite half-way up the thigh. Those that stand up in front, only

just high enough to protect the knee from thorns, admit leaves, sticks, and rain, and are far from comfortable.

As we were to take the hounds out on foot for roe-deer, I dressed myself accordingly, wearing a light blouse with a waistbelt, trousers, and laced ankle-boots, the ankles of which were of fustian, not to fetter the action of the instep. The blouse was of a very light material, a sort of brown holland, endeared to me from having been a portion of that which formed a far lovelier dress; and, when I joined my jolly companions at their breakfast, I felt as light as a trained greyhound in the slips.

As sportsmen very often make inquiries for dresses in which to encounter strong exercise — for comfort, coolness, freedom from any restraint, and lightness, I recommend the carefully cut-out blouse; the ammunition, or the powder, ball, wadding, and caps, carried in pockets in the waistbelt; a small pouch for cartridges when necessary over the shoulder, passed under a shoulder-knot. In warm weather, no waistcoat need be worn under the blouse; the waistcoat can be added if the weather makes one desirable. I succeeded at last in teaching Mr. Court Stephenson, of Great Marlborough-street, to cut out and make up the blouse to perfection.

"Do you think we shall come upon a boar to-day?" was the first question I asked.

"Oh, no!" the rejoinder; "no boars: we go to find the roe."

Oh! what a lovely morning it was when Jules and Maurice d'Anchald and myself, accompanied by a smoke-dried looking fellow, dignified with the name of huntsman simply because he could play on the French horn, started from the château, and took our way through those splendid woods, every pressure of our shoulders through the leafy boughs offering up fresh incense to the altar of St. Hubert, as the fading and bruised leaf of the varied copse sighed that the summer was over, though, like the vase of Moore, its scent in death was as sweet or even sweeter than ever. On we went, everything around us fresh and beautiful, save when a horrid whiff from the servant's pipe reminded me of passing some pothouse door.

"Heavens!" I thought, "how much that man loses by shutting out the perfumes of the woods with that inferior weed!"

Maurice, who hunted the hounds, had them all around him in couples as usual; but in such a woodland as this, with only a few narrow paths in it, and thick lying up to our very feet, and the drag of animals of chase crossing in all directions, hounds

must be taken through it in couples to the place of meeting.

Our pack was scanty enough, from the sickness in the kennel before alluded to; and among the little lot were Saxon and some others not fit to go, and all the rogues and cripples. At last we came to a new road, made by the Government for the service of the woods, running straight through the forest from horizon to horizon, and of ample dimensions; and here it was intended for myself and Jules to lie in ambush (M. d'Anchald having remained at home that day), while Maurice and the horn-player went to arouse a roe. On these occasions, when on foot, my friends wore a small crooked hunting-horn, such as we have in England, slung from the shoulder; and before going out we agreed on certain signals on our horns, to telegraph the kind of game aroused, or the usual points of chase. Maurice d'Anchald has everything in him to make a good huntsman; he is cool and steady, much freer from noise than his countrymen the French huntsmen in general, and is possessed of great good temper and untiring zeal.

After Jules and myself had severed to take up our positions, and I had chosen the stems of some trees growing close together, whence I could see into the high copsewood in front, as well as command a view

of the road either way, being myself at the same time pretty well screened from the observation of all animals, and having their wind, I paused to consider the wild beauty of my position.

Above the high copsewood, say of five and twenty years' growth, the gap cut in it for the width of the road admitted a bright view of the clear blue sky—the air so still that but for a light fleecy cloud that lazily veiled a small space in the heavens, I should hardly have known whence the propelling current proceeded. I had forgotten to bring a few downy feathers in my pocket, as is my wont on such occasions. Hark at that little merry voice on a level with my head! that is essentially French; we have no little bright green tree-frogs in England. There is the jay, there are tom-tits—those we have. But, hush! Maurice has uncoupled his hounds; for there go all the French babblers from the leash in full cry, not on any scent or drag, but in noisy or querulous anticipation of what there may be in store in the woods around. Wow, wow—there's old Musto!—bow-wow, babble babble! the noise continued for some little time, when wide of it chimed in the merry truth-proclaiming English foxhound tongue, and then Saxon's tongue; and then the cry thickened and got for a moment together—then it swayed this way

and that way, according to the run of the animal, whatever it was, they were on — and then as speed and limb, energy and muscle began to tell, the cry lengthened out into a drawling serpentine expression; and but for the difference of the lighter English foxhound tongue I should have been puzzled to have known which was head or tail.

Many hundred yards within the wood the hounds went by; so turning up the road abreast of them, I rounded the corner of the high copse into a young spring: when, ascertaining that they were off for another quarter of the forest, my horn gave the signal that they were "away," and I ran on by ear. For hours I lost sight of my companions, save when a glimpse of a figure could be caught as it crossed some distant pathway to the right or left of me; and as I turned in all directions to keep the wind of the cry, and crossed through the midst of several young springs, I came on the usings of litters of cub foxes, of wolves, and of boars, as well as on the lairs of roe.

And now became evident that which I had predicted when I saw such ill-matched and uneven creatures together. The able English foxhounds were a mile ahead, and the old French hounds, shifty and skirting, babbling, heel-running, and dodging in every conceivable manner. In one of the rides I heard the cry

coming to me,—when I say "the cry," I mean the least noisy portion of the hounds, those really at work and driving a scent,—so, gun in hand, with a ball in one barrel and a cartridge in the other, to suit either wolf and roe-deer, or boar, I stood still and slightly screened from view. The animal, however, whatever it was, had passed before I reached the spot, and a young English dog called "Corbeau" came at the head, with the other English foxhounds all well up, but the old steady bitches evidently in doubt as to whether they were doing right or wrong; and by that momentary glance I knew they could not be on a fox. Oh, what a rattling cheer and hallo, backed by my horn, I gave them; and how the old foxhound bitches cheered up as I cheered them on!—they had never heard the well-loved shout since they had left old England—and what fun it occasioned elsewhere! Jules and Maurice were not far off when my stirring shriek reached them—nothing cheering in it for their kind hearts; up they came, crashing through the copsewood, white as sheets, never having heard that cry before.

"My God! what has happened to you?"

"Happened to me? Nothing."

"What did you shriek so terribly for?"

"Shriek! I cheered the hounds!"

"Good God! we thought the boar had ripped you up!"

Ha, ha, ha! away, away; and again we severed, according to our ears or as our several fancies dictated.

Once more I found myself alone, and oh, how I longed to shoot some of the old babbling French hounds! I was down on almost all of their dodges that day. Finding they could not run up with the foxhounds, they took no more notice of them or of the hunted animal, but got together in twos and threes and made fresh scents for themselves, either by crossing the line that the foxhounds were on with and taking it up heelway, or by hunting the footsteps of one of their own stragglers, and at last, if they came on it in a ride, hunting in full cry the steps of their own masters. Leaving these old miscreants to their vices, I kept on after the hounds, who were doing all they could to beat their animal of chase, and presently there was no doubt left in my own mind as to what that beast of chase then was. The bay of the foxhounds became more continuous, and occasionally it ceased in its light merry pursuant chime, and fell into or became mixed up with a fierce bay. They're on the old solitary we have heard of, who whets his tusks on the bark of the birch trees by way of a card

to tell us he is "dangerous," and who doesn't care to quit the potatoes in the cottage gardens at the peasant's bidding! Hush—hark again! the bay is all sullen and angry now, and it loiters by the way. The boar is as much for fighting as running, and the few hounds that are up with him he over matches. Oh! how I ran; but as I neared the place, the noise again changed from a sort of half or walking bay to pursuit and active chase. Again and again did a change take place, and sometimes I seemed to head the cry, and sometimes to "check" it. I crept into the wood to meet it; I lay down to escape observation and to invite its approach; I ran that warm day, in and through that severe woodland, till I was as wet from heat as if I had swum a river; but from first till almost the last I never set eyes on any animal of chase whatever. After running for more than four hours, the little head of hounds there was again divided; from the usings I saw I think we must have put up or crossed a band of wild boars. The tail hounds some of them came up, and the hounds singly, as well as in twos and threes, were utterly scattered and speaking in all directions. Having stood still to listen, I soon saw that all was over, and touched my horn to get what hounds I could together. Jules and myself then crossed, and again separated. At

that moment I heard some hounds (there might be about three) coming towards me, and as they seemed to be holding to a strong line I touched my horn, and was about to put it to my lips again, when something dashed across the little narrow path. Dropping my horn, I fired in the direction which I guessed it was taking, but without any visible result. Just as the three hounds followed on its line across the path Jules came up, and as he saw the hounds he cried to me that Blossom had been ripped by the boar. We then heard Maurice touch his horn, and after some trouble we succeeded in calling the majority of the hounds together, after as hard a run of five hours' duration, for them and for us three, as it is possible to imagine, with, I believe, about six or seven leagues to walk home.

"Where's the huntsman?" we exclaimed to each other with a jovial laugh.

"I don't know," was the reply from each elicited. "I have never set eyes on him nor heard him since we began."

"Well, come along, my boys;" and stouter pedestrians I never saw—a pull at the cherry-brandy or the currant-brandy, and a bit of bread, and then for the old château.

"I can't make out," I exclaimed, "what I shot at.

It was about the height and length of a fox; but when it saw me it blundered in its desperate hurry against the stems of some young blackthorns audibly and roughly; and I never knew a fox do that. It might have been a young wild boar from a litter; and yet old Blossom, wounded in the flank as she had been, was running it merrily. No, it must have been a fox, who accidentally and unusually, did not see where he was going."

As we came out on one of the long straight rides we had to cross, and near the spot where we had begun, there sat our huntsman or hornblower on a heap of stones, smoking his short black pipe as usual —as a groom would say, not having turned a hair on his coat.

"Oh," I said to myself, "if you were my man, wouldn't I just about drop into you!"

This worthy, however, arose cool and comfortable from his seat, and condescended to keep up to us while we walked home.

The insight which this day afforded me into these woods made me fully aware that there was not sufficient knowledge possessed by my friends of the haunts of the animals of chase. We were supposed to be about to find nothing but roe-deer, whereas we came upon an old solitary boar, as well as on a band

of younger ones or "beasts of company," and perhaps upon a sow with a litter, and I think on wolves. No lack of the larger game. What we are most in need of is that which we cannot do without; our kennelled means are utterly inadequate to match the splendid denizens of the forest. Strange, that in that one particular on which the whole idea is based, and without which all is utterly in vain — the horse a useless expenditure and the gun an ineffective burthen — a French establishment should be an entire failure. Had I the command of such a forest filled with such beasts of chase, the first thing I should have looked for and acquired would have been an ample pack of hounds; they could have slept in a barn; the kennel, compared with them, and the stable too, would have been but secondary considerations. Ill-mounted, ill-stabled, unkennelled, with hounds able and fit for work, a sportsman may be triumphant; without hounds, the best horses, the surest gun, and the most perfect kennel, are, as far as sport goes, useless. I should here remark that we were working with a lot of hounds which M. d'Anchald intended for the purposes of breeding more than of hunting; but by a better selection each might have been well combined.

I had now been only twice in chase of a boar, and

during those two days had never viewed one, save the first as he fell dead. Nevertheless I had quite resolved in my own mind one fact, and that was, that when an old solitary wild boar was brought to bay, and had made up his mind to fight it out, the man was a downright good one who had cool resolution sufficient in the first place to ascertain which way the wind blew, and then, his life depending on his eye and hand and the ignition and certainty of his fire, to make his way steadily through the blinding and dense copsewood up to where the sullen war was raging, and, at the risk of a charge being made on him by the boar ere he had yet seen him, peer through the bushes, ascertain the position of every hound, and slay the mighty monster in his "arm-chair."

When the boar is *fixed at bay by the hounds*, he seats himself on his hams against a tree or bush, and in that position awaits his baying assailants, till one more bold than the rest comes within the reach of his tusk. To hear the *vieux sanglier* charge through the dense cover, which he always selects to fight or die in, on some assailant, reminds me of the first rush of a rocket, so do his immensely wide shoulders, propelled by his Herculean loins and quarters, crash through all impediments. His charge is sure to be

heard; for when he makes it, all baying around him for the moment ceases, as every hound has to save himself and get out of the way. The only cry that is occasionally heard during the charge proceeds from some unhappy individual of the pack whose life or limbs are sacrificed to the boar's fury. His road being for a space thus cleared, the chase again continues for a minute or two with a lively hunting cry, but soon assumes the sullen roar which proclaims the old solitary once more in his arm-chair. When an old boar of this sort, with all his power about him and unwounded, turns to bay, and, either from distress or from anger, ceases to fly, then, unless the gentleman makes in in aid of the hounds, the whole pack, one hound after the other, may be destroyed. In one of these encounters, M. d'Anchald had fourteen out of eighteen hounds killed or put *hors de combât* ere the *vieux solitaire* succumbed.

Thus it will be seen that to ensure sport, or, indeed to be certain of having any pack at all, more hounds are needed than for the chase of either stag or fox in England. From the weak packs that the French huntsmen take out for the boar or wolf, the animals of chase, and the old boar particularly, do not care to fly; and the latter, as on the day the occurrences of which I have just recounted, will keep walking and

trotting on, occasionally pausing in a sort of half "bay" that is perfectly heart-breaking to me, or to any huntsman loving the hound and longing to slay the quarry. A boar of this sort thus obtains many opportunities for killing and maiming the hounds; while at the same moment, like the ancient Scottish moss-trooper on the Border, he selects his own time and place for fight or flight, without giving the foe he dreads yet dares, the chance of coming to close quarters unless at a disadvantage. From the weakness of the pack, I once knew a sow whom we had surrounded by the aid of many men in blouses, in a considerable but detached portion of the woods, actually reverse the position of things, and chase and beat our hounds out of cover; and when she found they were no longer on her line, then she took the opportunity of breaking away unobserved, and eventually escaping. When the boars are thus wicked, and there are roe-deer, foxes, or hares, or, in short, anything at hand that is less dangerous, better to eat, and more easily killed, of course the cunning old French hounds, all of whom have been entered by their owners at all these animals, even to the rabbit, immediately desist from the dangerous pursuit and adopt some safer one; so that, unless the huntsmen and gentlemen immediately make in to cheer up and

back their hounds, the chase will die of inanition, and expire of itself.

When M. d'Anchald came over to England and asked my advice as to how he should establish a pack by breeding, I advised him to buy some of our best old foxhound bitches, who, being deemed too slow to run up, had been bred from by their owners — the best guarantee for their worth — but who were of an age yet to have a litter or two of puppies. I little thought that such steady slow old creatures as these would be called upon to form the mainstay of the hunting hounds. The very expectation is ridiculous. A hound too old to catch the animal she has hunted all her life, and which she has been *able to kill* and triumph over, could not be expected to take zealously to the chase of a creature that could kill her; so, what with cunning old roguish French hounds and worn-out English ones, hounds with full stomachs, and hounds like herrings, with no inside at all, my English brethren will guess the fix in which we were, and this in such a woodland.

The idle horn-blower, called a huntsman, who sat on a heap of stones and smoked a pipe while his masters and their hounds were running, did not remain at the château long. One day he came into the kennel and discovered the old boiler feeding the

hounds as I had taught him, drafting them in one by one, when he threatened to knock the old man down if he attempted to adopt so useless a ceremony—a ceremony never heard of in France; and on this reaching the ears at head-quarters, the fool was forthwith *chasséed*—and a very good job too.

We got home to a late dinner, after this very hard work; and during the night all the hounds came to kennel. The following day, there being no hunting, was one of comparative rest; and resolving to dedicate some hours to the river and to the good-looking perch-holes I had seen, I stretched myself to thoroughly-needed repose, and fell asleep, averring to myself that MM. Jules and Maurice d'Anchald were about two of the stoutest pedestrians I had ever seen.

CHAP. VII.

"The times have been
That when the brains were out, the man would die,
And then an end—but now they rise again."

Macbeth.

It was on a Wednesday, and one of the loveliest mornings I ever saw, peculiar to the soft climate of sunny Southern France—for though the situation of Château Sauvages is, properly speaking, central, still the airs which whispered through the wilds and came so warm to the cheek were all of more southerly extraction—on one of these, the loveliest of all lovely mornings then, having asked for some live minnows for fishing, my friends and myself adjourned in the first instance to the kennel.

"Come," I said, "the hounds are looking fresher, their eyes are cleaner, and more of them are able to go out. What has happened to old Papajow's stern? He looks as little like a thoroughbred anything, as any animal can well do."

"Oh! he had a fever."

"Well, what has that to do with his stern?"

"The veterinary surgeon bled him."

"Bled him? Well and what had that to do with it?"

"Oh! he said it was dangerous to attempt to bleed a dog in the neck, so he cut off the end of his stern."

"Oh! St. Hubert," I groaned; "when wilt thou come with thy fanners to cleanse the kennel floor?"

Just then the old boiler mildly suggested that *he thought* the old babbler that had been taken out to otter hunt was *not quite well;* and on inquiring why that suspicion occurred to him, he said *he had never been out of his straw nor eaten anything for two days.* I went into the lodging house, and found him dying of red-hot fever.

"Here there is an excellent case for a lesson," I said: "fetch me your best lancet and a piece of string, and I will teach you all the way to bleed a hound—though, perhaps, as it demands a superb lancet and a very light but sure touch, you may not succeed in the first trial."

We then took the patient outside the kennel, got up the vein as usual with the tightened string, and, with one of the best lancets I ever saw, I let him blood in

the most artistic fashion, his blood being of the hue and consistency of very bad thick black ink.

"Well," I said, "there is no saving this hound's life; but, as he is utterly useless, why, so much the better."

Having now had experience of the way hounds are treated in the French kennels, and the manner in which the kennel establishment is abandoned from the last day of the hunting season to the first of the next season's commencement, I am in utter astonishment, taking into consideration the warmth of the summer in France, how whole establishments, men and hounds, have escaped that terrible and fatal disease the hydrophobia. When the poor hounds are no longer of immediate use, it seems to me as if, like furniture, they were thrown aside in some lumber-room or corner, to be simply taken out and dusted when wanted to be used again. As I saw proved in this kennel, hounds might lie in their straw for days together, without touching a morsel of food or water, and no notice would be taken of it; add to which they might all be as thin as whipping posts, and blinded in their eyes with matter, and not a soul attempt to counteract the visible evil. Used to hounds and dogs as I had been all my life, I shuddered to think of what might have been the consequence had

a rabid animal, suffering from the hydrophobia, got among them: and on this head I prayed my friends for the future to be more careful. If any decrease of animal spirits, or repugnance to food, dulness, or estrangedness of manner was perceptible in a hound, he ought that instant to be removed from his fellows. Loss of spirits and absence of appetite are the forerunners of many diseases, *and may be the first symptom of madness;* and therefore on every account each day, morning, noon, and night, the pack should be inspected, and any hound showing such symptoms should be removed.

While on this very serious subject, and for the benefit of the general reader, I will allude to an error in reference to hydrophobia which has gained some credence, and it is, that a dog suffering from this fatal madness, will occasionally, or has been known "occasionally to lap water." I am most anxious to bring this matter before the public on the very first opportunity, because the assertion of this error is calculated to do much harm; and it may not only cause many valuable animals that are not suffering from hydrophobia to be destroyed, but, supposing one of those dogs had bitten a man, the most terrible horrors might invade the human mind, for which there was not the remotest foundation. Instead of

a dog suffering from hydrophobia lapping water, the very fact of his lapping the water, whether he swallows it or not, proves the difference between the inevitably fatal madness and a temporary insanity from which the patient may recover.

There is a phase in that scourge to all kennels, the distemper, which, in every symptom that it has, is so nearly allied to hydrophobia, that, unless by the fact that the one patient will greedily lap water, though he may or may not swallow it, and the other dreads its very sight — its noise as well as its touch — the two madnesses cannot be distinguished the one from the other. In the number of years that I have kept and thoroughly administered to hounds and greyhounds, I have had several opportunities of observing this, and I know that the test of water is the only infallible detection between the two. In this the most fatal phase of the distemper, the brain, the lungs, and the whole of the internal structure, is in a state, more or less, of inflammatory action, extending to the throat, and, by spasmodic action, often preventing the thirsting animal from swallowing the water at which he will lap so greedily. Fits very frequently attend this madness from distemper — for the dog is perfectly insane, and will snap at and bite anything that comes near him. Fits are not always its accompaniment; if they

do supervene, the dog, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, dies. In these cases of mad distemper, caused by a general inflammatory action, commencing usually with the lungs, bleeding, blistering, setons, and hot baths, taking care not to let the hot bath be turned into a cold one by exposure to the air while the coat is wet (a thing often done by ignorant servants), combined together and freely persisted in, are the only cures. Even then it is difficult to save one in three who are thus affected. I had a servant, usually not afraid of anything, bitten by a greyhound while in this mad state, and for weeks after the man had (or took it into his head that he had) the most curious canine fancies. I kept up his spirits, assured him that the greyhounds were none of them mad from hydrophobia, and told him that, if he found a repugnance to a pot of beer, and an impossibility to drink it, then only would the faith I had in the opinion I promulgated be shaken. He took his beer with his customary relish, his thumb got well, and some of the dogs recovered — a proof at once that they never had had the hydrophobia; for all in this distemper were kept in a hospital together, and had bitten each other, turn and turn about, throughout their sufferings.

Let my readers, then, take this additional advice;

if a dog is supposed to be mad with hydrophobia, and particularly if he has bitten any living thing, never kill him, if by any possibility you can catch and safely confine him. Many a dog mad from distemper is said to be mad from hydrophobia; many a man's mind has been made nervously miserable under the belief of having been bitten by the fatal tooth; whereas, if the dog that gave the bite *had not been killed*, the dog's recovery would have set the mind at rest. From madness arising from hydrophobia there is no recovery; but from distemper madness, *in all symptoms but the one of lapping water precisely allied to hydrophobia*, there is very frequently recovery, although it is the worst phase of the many in which the distemper makes itself so terrible a scourge. Having pressed this on the serious reflection of my readers, we will return to the investigation of the kennel at the château, myself and my friends having adjourned to an old walled garden in which were a number of foxhound whelps, and the four bloodhound whelps I had brought with me by Druid, as well as some foxhound puppies owing their paternity to Saxon. The old and ample walled garden, with a huge deserted pigeon-house in the middle, which made them a very good lodging, was, to look at, a paradise for whelps; but, alas! they were all

in the worst possible condition, all stunted in growth and with no symptoms of thriving, and eaten up with the worst of all vermin, the louse. Malwood's two enormously-limbed whelps by Druid, in hue and sleekness when compared to their tiny playfellows, looked like gigantic moles, while her two foster children, both by Druid, the dam in the possession of Lord Bath, were equally healthful and happy. Having prescribed a wash and more nourishing food for the smaller whelps, it was not long before they got the better of their complaints, but not till they had badly infected the Druid puppies.

The kennel inspection concluded, and entreaties persisted in that, as we were to hunt roe-deer on the following morning, all feeding on this, the previous day, might be over early—

"Now, Jules," I cried, "where is your minnow-net, and how shall we catch the live bait?"

"You shall have some directly; come along."

We went then into the kitchen; and, on coming there, I exclaimed, in raptures, on viewing as handsome a yellow English setter as ever I wish to see,

"Oh, Jules, what a perfect setter!"

"Oh, no, it is not a setter."

"Not a setter! Why, I never saw a more perfect one, to look at. There, if you please, you have

got the right thing, if he is as good as he looks to be."

"Oh, yes, he is good,—but he is not a setter."

"Not a setter!" I cried, rubbing my hat upon my head, as if I desired to be bald for life; then casting aside all indignation, I repeated, "Not a setter! Now, my dear Jules, you are a sensible fellow, and I must think you have good grounds for contradicting me about a dog whose breed I will swear is of English or Irish extraction. If he is not a setter, with that nice flowing silken yellow coat, and beautifully feathered stern, what is he then?"

"Oh, no, he is not a setter; he is a pointer."

"A pointer! Why?"

"Oh, he always points his game; he never sets."

Had I not been close to the fire-place I should have fainted, so, instead of falling, I dived into a corner outside the door where I had left my fishing-rod, and began to take off the cover. Having finished my preparation for fishing so far, I looked in to see if Jules was after his minnow net, for the morning was getting on, and I was anxious to begin. My readers will then imagine my astonishment as well as impatience when I beheld him at the kitchen-table, attended by some old ladies in wooden shoes, and in the act of tying up two large glass bottles, as I

supposed for leeches. It could not be for pickling or preserving, for he had tied up their necks with a tight piece of rag, into the strained surface of which he was industriously pricking holes.

"Come on, Jules, and leave the bottles; I shall never have time to work the minnow-net, catch live bait, and try the holes for perch."

"I'm ready; you take up your rod and the casting-net, and I'll get you live bait. So come along."

"The casting-net?" I exclaimed; "that is too large in the mesh, for anything under a quarter of a pound; if you've no other net than that, I shall get no live bait."

"Oh yes! we have plenty of live minnows; come along—bring the net; he has nothing to do with minnows; I catch your minnows when we get to the river, while you put your rod together. Come along."

Thus speaking, and with the air of a man who knew what he was about, Jules preceded me, bearing in either hand a large glass decanter, plain, and very transparent, about the size of what we should denominate in English a magnum, into which I perceived he had inserted half a handful of crumbs of bread. I gazed at him in astonishment, with dreamy notions of

bottle-imps and conjurations; but his bearing was so positive that I followed in speechless mystification. At length we reached the river, and the first good-looking perch-hole, where he halted, with these words:

"Now then, you put your rod together; get out your line and hook; and when you have done that, I will have a hundred live minnows."

So saying, I saw him lie down by the side of the stream, at a shallower place, for a moment or two; and then return to get up his casting net and see that it was fit for use. In five minutes I was ready; and, in a sort of hopeless agony, asked him—

"Where are my live minnows?"

"All ready!" he exclaimed, scarce taking his eyes from the lead line with which he was busy; then dropping the net, he repaired to the shallow, and, lifting only one of his bottles, brought it to me filled—a jolly full bottle of fine lively minnows of the most approved sort.

These bottles are made on purpose for fishing. That part at the nether end which protrudes inwards to the centre (and which, I believe, must protrude a little in all cases; but is often, for the purposes of short measure, made much larger than necessary), in these fishing bottles was a trifle more elongated, and at the end of it there was a hole about the size of a finger,

to admit the minnows to the bait. When in, the formation of the bottle became much the same in shape and effect as the entrance to an eel-wheel, or thief, or hoop-net, and the minnows never thought of attempting to get out again at the right place. A handier contrivance I never saw, for when held upright the water sank only as low as the entrance hole, and there was enough water still retained to keep the minnows alive in moving from place to place; when stationary the bottle was again sunk, and set to fish, moored to the side of the stream with a piece of string. Holes being pricked in the rag over the top, the air escaped and the bottle lay at the bottom fairly on its side.

It was intensely hot; I never in my life was so hot, or so much inclined, in the good condition I am always in, to profuse perspiration. The day seemed made for perch in deep shaded holes; but though I worked the live bait as well as the Thames "Paternoster," not a perch could I move; at last there came a brisk sharp tug at my line, and I landed, with the aid of Jules (for I had no landing-net), a pretty little pike of a couple of pounds.

"Hark!" I said to myself, "don't I know what that is?"

The air was as still as death; but, nevertheless, afar off in the distant forest I heard a noise like the

approaching roar of an incoming tide, or the "bore" in the river Severn.

"I shall soon be as wet as you are, Jules; for here comes the thunder-storm."

He had been throwing the casting-net for a couple of hours in nothing but his shirt and trousers, so he was as wet as if he had swum as well as fished the stream.

"Never mind; let's send the first fellow we see for some brandy and a bit of bread;" and, one of the labourers from the château coming in sight, we did so; and then down came the rain.

As not a fish would run (and I do not believe there are many there) Jules and myself took turn and turn about with the casting-net, and caught some chub, pike, and roach, but none of them of any size; the only fish I saw in any amount or of any size were the crayfish, and they were in the most extraordinary and plenteous perfection.

It appears to me that nothing in the shape of game or fish is preserved in France, and, as to the *port d'armes*, it is never enforced. Every boy and man from fifteen to ninety owns, and when he likes it, carries a gun on his landlord's land, as well as in the woods of his neighbours, and not a territorial right is enforced. I had heard a good deal of French legis-

lation; but if all the laws are as thoroughly evaded as the one for the possession and use of firearms, it would need no skilful lawyer "to drive a coach and six through their acts of Parliament." Besides this, in regard to this particular enactment, and while the law prohibits the sale of powder, yet the Government tacitly recognises the possession of arms and ammunition, by empowering and commanding the *louvetier*, or gentleman appointed to compass the destruction of wolf and wild boar when the depredations of those animals are visible, to call out hundreds of the male population, *with their guns*, to aid in hunting them. This blowing hot and cold with the same breath is not a fault which I should have expected to have found under the cocked-hats of France.

Resolved not to go home without a dish of fish, we kept hard at our work in casting the net; and it was only when the half-hour bell for dressing sounded at the château, that, to keep ourselves warm, not having a dry thread on us, we began to skip towards the locality of dinner.

Having held a consultation as to what it was best to do on the following morning, as venison was wanted for the table, and the hounds in no condition for hard work, and the horses not quite fit to go, it was, as advised by me, resolved to take out some of

the hounds most fit, and again to "attack" a point of the woods where my friends felt sure we should find nothing but a roe. We decided to have an easy day on account of the state of the hounds. Vain mortals, to deem for a moment that any one but our patron saint could rule the accidents of chase!

CHAP. VIII.

> " With impotence of will
> We wheel, though ghastly shadows interpose
> Round us, and round each other."
>
> *Shelley.*

In coming down to breakfast rather earlier than usual (for I had impressed it on my companions that, to have a short easy day for hounds, it was much better to begin early and come home early than to go out late and come home after dark), I found Jules d'Anchald none the worse for being in the water the whole of the previous day; nor was I the worse for being in the river half the day. Having had rather a hard run of work up to this time, M. d'Anchald insisted that only he and I should ride up to the forest, and then, tying up our horses, use them but in case of emergency. It was, in my opinion, too soon to take dear old Coco (for whom I had an immense affection, and it was becoming mutual) out again; but, resolving at the same time to spare him as much as

possible, I consented to my kind friend's proposition. Jules, Maurice, and the sedentary huntsman (who had not yet been discharged) went on foot. We settled to throw off in a part of the woods where all my friends were certain there was nothing but roe-deer; and, in nearing the spot, M. d'Anchald and myself went on to take up positions in a ride. Now, the difference between my practice and the French practice, in taking up a position for a shot at a hunted, or driven, and very wild animal, is this: — In approaching the desired ambush I make no noise, and if I have to speak it is in a whisper, and for this very good sylvan reason. The wild, and, in a hunted country, the cautious animal of chase, may be in a lair, within hearing; and I am perfectly sure, being the more suspicious because he has not the wind, that when he knows that in one particular direction nothing but his ear or eye can serve him, if his ear catches the human tongue, or any attribute usually accompanying it, such as the stamping of a tethered horse, or any noise of the sort, down goes a resolution on his mental pocket-book, rather to charge the known, the lesser, and the noisy danger behind him, than to let himself be forced into silent peril which he suspects, but cannot be quite sure of. If I were of

my own will to take up a position, I should creep there silently, and leave my horse half a mile in the rear.

Not thus the French practice. They will go to their place of ambush talking at the top of their voices, and when they have reached the given spot they will tether their horses perhaps within thirty yards of the position, and when they have attained their places they will give to each other what would be termed in England a view-halloo, to ascertain their exact localities. I know the errors and more than probable results of this practice; but all the hints I gave failed to change it. People, particularly Frenchmen, do not assign to the animals of chase half the reasoning powers they possess; and hence arise so many discomfitures. Take, for instance, the fact that has thrust itself on my conviction in the English and Scotch forests — but it is best illustrated in the English, where men and deer are more often seen by each other.

If a herd of deer, or a single deer, see a man, and observe that he is intent on other matters than their destruction, *they care not for his scent;* but, having the wind of him, they will let him come within a hundred yards. But on the contary, if they wind a man *who is unseen,* and who *may be in ambush* to compass their

deaths, and being unable to see him for whose presence or actions *they cannot exactly account*, then, having the wind of him and not being able to reconcile their safety with his presence, a deer or a herd of deer will fly for miles. It is impossible for a huntsman or stalker of deer to glean from the book of nature a stronger fact than this to guide him in all future proceedings. If deer, even in a park, and in the venison season, see a man get up into a tree, they will remember the fact, however long or completely thereafter the man may be concealed from their gaze; and nothing will induce them, till they see him leave that tree, to forget it.

On the morning to which I refer, M. d'Anchald and myself waited in a ride, while the hounds, with his sons and the man called a huntsman, went up wind of us to commence the draw. As usual, my ear detected the babbling of the French hounds, who went from the hand of Maurice in full cry; soon after a real cry of French and English hounds came down the wind, but at a great distance, and then it died completely away. The day was wild, with too much wind, so M. d'Anchald and myself took to our horses and separated. I was standing in a ride, listening to the cry which I had recovered, and several times had opportunities of observing

the self-hunting of the old French hounds. When the cry was the least too full or too fast to please them, they cut it, and went sneaking about to find a scent for themselves; and many a hearty rating, which they understood from tone more than verbal expression, they got from me *for hanging on my gun.* My friends, I know, will not believe it of their worthless favourites, but some of these sensible old brutes, finding, from past experience, that if they don't take care of themselves as to too much work, their masters won't (for French gentlemen, as long as they are not tired themselves, will never see that their hounds are), will not exert themselves at animals whom *they know they cannot catch, unless shot at and wounded.* Hence, in time, having learnt the use of the gun, if they find out its position they will be for ever skirting for it; and as they know that the ride is the place where guns are posted and the animals killed or wounded, they separate from the honestly-working pack, and hang or skirt for a ride wherever it may be, and *are always getting between the gun* and an animal coming right upon it, to the certain discomfiture of the shot. More animals, wolves, boars, deer, and foxes, owe their lives to the noisy skirting propensities of these hounds in their crafty old age, than ever they assisted to kill in their youth; and if I could but get my friends to

do good execution on them all, they would find their larder better supplied with wild boar and roe-deer venison, and their rugs and backs of chairs more fully ornamented with skins.

The cry then came near me, hounds running hard; though French hounds have so much tongue and such an odd way of doubling it, that their tongues are perpetually faster than their feet, and a man unused to their empty noise would conceive they were closing on a beaten beast. Still I could hear Corbeau and the English hounds at the head, and hard at it; so, whatever the animal was, he was among them. Several times I stabled old Coco, much to his dislike, in the bushes, tying him with the leathern rein affixed to the chin stay for the purpose, and taking care that the bough or tree to which he was attached should be a pliant and a tough grower. I headed the cry this way and that: whatever the animal was, it turned very short, and had come within twenty yards of me in the thick cover; still I could not even hear what it was. There was neither bound nor brush of bush, and I settled in my own mind it must be a fox, for I had seen my foxhounds in England beat and tree a martin-cat in twenty minutes, and the animal we were now in pursuit of had run for more than an hour. Presently, bang went a gun, but no sign from

the shooter to us as to what had happened, or what was going on; so I made for the place, unluckily in search of information, and found that M. d'Anchald had fired at, but had not killed, the martin-cat of which the hounds were in chase. The martin-cat headed back, and M. d'Anchald ought to have shouted to us in French or English "to look back," when we should have kept our posts, instead of running up to him, and perhaps have obtained a victory. Jules d'Anchald might have killed the animal, when once or twice it got into a tree; but, thinking the martin-cat would remain, he lost his shot by good-naturedly calling for me. After running a martin-cat for two hours — will you believe it, ye English huntsmen? — he fairly beat us by running; and the poor hounds, quite run out and tired, gave in. The thing we ought to have done was to have taken them home *then*, on anything, in their condition, but an easy day. Two hours in the terribly severe cover, with an animal whose scent and peculiar short running led them on, was ample; but my friends were not tired: they still, most kindly, wished to show me sport; so the state of the hounds, though I called attention to it, was again forgotten.

Well, we drew a second time, and—to show what these woods may contain, in spite of such hounds as

at present are there—in the same quarter of the forest where we had made all this noise at a martin-cat, and immediately, the jaded hounds were again in full cry, the French hounds walking and picking their way as wide as they pleased of the line, howling at the briars in addition to making cry enough for forty couple of fresh hounds. In this peculiar art—as I have before remarked—they are wonderful, when, as the folly and deception of it seems not to be understood in France, and French huntsmen being kept in an artificial state of excitement and erroneous belief, the day's pleasure is to them perpetually prolonged.

On returning for my horse for this second draw, I discovered that sagacious old Coco had broken loose and taken the ride which led home—of that I was certain by his foot-marks; so M. d'Anchald sent the sedentary huntsman, to that so-called huntsman's great delight, on his tracks, to ascertain that he had delivered himself safely at his stables—a thing the good old steed had done with the greatest care and punctuality, though, of course, the sedentary man did not take the trouble to return and tell us so. Thus left to my own legs, the hounds, as I before said, being soon in full cry, and, by the English tongues, evidently ona tremendous scent, it was not long before M. d'Anchald's

horn played the air of the roused wild boar. As usual, when boars were said to be nowhere near, there they were—at least, one was; and I believe he was the wicked solitary of whose potatoe ravages we had received complaints, and who had wounded old Blossom. We ran this boar till all the hounds could do nothing more than make a noise, and there was as much chance of killing as there was of running into the moon, unless the old boar had turned sulky and brought himself to bay; nevertheless, M. d'Anchald rode to his hounds, till I could see and hear he had not above two or three to ride to, when, as it was growing dark, and our easy day that was to have been had become as hard a one as man could wish to avoid, we, the pedestrians, turned our face home in company with two or three tired hounds, and left M. d'Anchald to follow us. He overtook us without any hounds with him, and the rest of the jaded few were left to follow as they could.

I was very tired, but not in the least sorry that my dear old horse had left me, and had at least secured his easy day; for, as this was on a Thursday, and I had to ride him again in work expected to be serious on Saturday, he would be all the better for a little rest.

It had now become very evident to me that the French system with hounds would spoil the best-bred animals that the English kennels afford. In France the servants called huntsmen are selected, not from knowing anything of the art of venerie, or of the nature of the animal placed under them to be educated and cared for, but simply because they are musicians and can play on the huge horn; and, as I think I have said before, they are necessitated to seek such a domestic at the opera rather than on account of any skill he has in woodcraft. This is so manifestly wrong that I wonder that the gentlemen, reserving their cumbrous musical instruments to themselves—if they must have them—do not ordain that it shall be sufficient for the servants to use the little straight English hunting-horn, so much better understood by the hounds; and, while he is attending to and aiding the direct chase, let him leave to his masters the apoplectic pastime of winding a huge instrument, and through it talking to their friends. Hounds in France are used exactly as if their masters thought they were carved in wood, or were bodies set on wheels, which must go on like those of a carriage when set in motion, and that, like a carriage at the end of March, they might be shut up in a sort of coach-house or kennel, and not taken out again or looked at

till wanted in September; — with only this difference, that a coachman does visit his carriage, and brush it up, and keep it in visibly fair condition; whereas, as previously described, when the hunting season is over, the hounds are never taken out to exercise or cared for, save in setting before them, in the most slovenly manner, bad food, till the season recommences. A gentleman, perhaps, will order his hounds to be dressed with brimstone once or twice in a season, and having done so, he is satisfied; after that they are left usually to an idle and ignorant horn-blower, or to some old labouring man established as boiler and feeder, who knows about as much of a hound's condition as he knows of diplomacy, and who is deemed incapable of doing anything else—and this in the finest hunting woodlands in the world, filled with the best animals of chase.

In energy, perseverance, courage, and love of sport, you cannot find a fault with the French gentlemen; you cannot surpass, though you may equal him, in the dangerous but beautiful pleasure of making in on a huge *solitaire* at bay; all the French gentleman wants is a more efficient pack of hounds, and the knowledge of how those hounds should be treated. Frenchmen have much to learn in the art of venerie with hounds; they can shoot, they can ride, and they

delightfully revel in the excitement caused by the full cry; but they are utterly ignorant of condition, shape, make, and method, and know no more of the real worth of a hound than I do of the Polar Region.

The next morning having been down some time before the breakfast hour, I appropriated to myself a minnow bottle, and having tied a rag over the top and pricked holes in it, and baited it with crumbs of bread, I took it to a little ditch that formed one side of the kitchen gardens, and set it for minnows, standing by to watch them go in. I cannot help thinking that French minnows are as bold as English tritons; for, nothing daunted at the splash of the bottle or its bubbles when introduced under water, or at my presence, the instant the bottle was at the bottom on its side, they flocked about it, ran their noses against its transparent sides, and soon found out the entrance, and when first in and unaware of confinement set to work right merrily at the crumbs of bread. Having watched my bottle get very full of imps, I fished it up, gave the finny tribe their liberty, and set it again, and when the bell rang ran in to breakfast.

We did all sorts of things this day. I inspected the hounds, prescribed for the sick ones, and again prayed for early feeding. After that, I fished; and after that got my gun and shot partridge (not the red leg) and

landrail, and our bag consisted of these birds, carp, and chub; there were neither pike nor perch to be taken with the line. The partridges here are of the two sorts—those common in England and the red leg, although I never saw the latter. They are alike very scarce, though the cultivated land in the valleys that intersect the woods is decidedly favourable for them, as it would be for pheasants: of the latter there are none; neither are there any stags or fallow deer. I am surprised at this, for in such an enormous tract of forest and woodland, with the sanction of the Government, the resident gentlemen might agree among themselves to have both pheasants and deer, and thus enhance the sylvan attraction. Quails and landrails, both in considerable quantities, come to these valleys. I killed several of either sort during my stay, and saw on the wing, and tasted, dressed in his vine-leaf, the delicious little *bec-figue*. There are plenty of the common moor-hen and dabchick in the river; and in winter, in the places of their resort, plenty of ducks, snipes, and woodcocks. I killed a couple of whole snipes during my stay. No one in this forest, or that I could see in its vicinity, ever thinks of destroying either winged or the lesser four-footed vermin; so that fact, coupled with the neglect of the necessity of a "port d'armes," and every man and boy being in possession of a gun

of some sort, and all of them shooting on the Sunday—which, in France, seems to be a day specially set apart for that purpose — together may very readily account for the scarcity of any game that haunts the open lands.

Intelligence having reached us from a neighbouring *louvetier*, M. Lucas, that a very large boar was known to be in the woods on his side of the forest, we gladly accepted his invitation to join him the following morning, not only to share in the expected attack on an old *solitaire*, but also to give our sickly and jaded hounds a longer rest. We were to start early; so previously to seeking my pillow, I set my gun, horn, boots, belts, and spurs in proper order and ready to my hand, and soon fell into that sleep which, strange to say, the weary as well as temperate sportsman cannot always command.

CHAP. IX.

" The forest is wild, but wilder by far
My friends who engage in the sylvan war.
No management, method, nor cunning, nor craft,
The wolf and the wild boar must think us all daft.
As Irishmen say — by the 'breath of all powers' —
The *limier's* behind his boar, twenty-four hours ! "

Berkeley.

THE Saturday morning, on which we were to join MM. Lucas and E. Brunier in pursuit of the wild boar, said to be in that part of the forest, and very " wickedly " inclined, dawned with a wildish sky and a fitful wind; but, hoping that it would continue at least dry, we finished our breakfast, and started in the open carriage behind the powerful white mare. After a pleasant drive, my friend M. d'Anchald and myself talking over old times when he used to be in England, we arrived at one of those queer little places in France doing duty for a village inn, and found there assembled several gentlemen, in considerable excitement, for the wicked old *solitaire* was said to have been safely harboured by the huntsman and his

line-hound or *limier*; and a bit of stick was shown me, the measured breadth of the boar's hind foot. Oh! but we were all immensely jolly! And, while we were waiting around the little inn in which the servants called huntsmen were filling themselves out like their hounds with morning provender to sustain them through the day's fatigue (with the great *differential fact* that they, the huntsmen, were to *ride*, and not, like the hounds, to *run*), several gentlemen whom I had not before met gathered good-humouredly around me to inspect my appointments; and they called my weapon the "great gun of Sebastopol," as to the locks of which all my friends were perpetually in dismay.

Every Frenchman whom I met, after looking suspiciously at the hammer of my gun tapped it with his finger, and said, "Dangerous."

"Yes sir," I always replied, "to animals."

"No, no," was his rejoinder: "to animals of course," with a civility of manner perfectly bewitching; "but to your friends."

"Ah! no, sir, not in the least."

"Yes, permit me?" when he immediately put the hammer down on the nipple.

"Ah! no," I cried, putting it back to the half-cock;—"so it is safest. Besides, I always follow an

excellent proverb, but which is very often neglected —by my own countrymen occasionally, but by your countrymen invariably—and that is, *I always look at my gun, and never let my gun look at me or at any of my friends;* so, supposing a miracle was vouchsafed to it, and it fired by spontaneous combustion, it could do no harm."

They shook their heads, as if suspicious that the overpowering excitement so constitutional with them must prevent me from being careful; and then they brought me their guns, the hammers of some of them, when at half-cock, being so close down upon the nipple, as scarcely to admit of a possibility of judging whether they touched the cap or not. On studying the reason of this proximity of the half-cock to the nipple, I discovered it to be the French idea that then, if the spring of the hammer and trigger gave way, the fall of the hammer would not have force enough to explode the cap. I shrugged *my* shoulders, and said I should be very sorry to found my ideas of *their* safety on such a plea.

At last, the servants and their *limier* being well filled, we started for the wood in which the wicked solitary was said to be harboured; and a report got about that a day or two previous, while the huntsman was boring the boar to death with his *limier* in

an endeavour to make him safe for the Saturday's chase, the *vieux sanglier* charged him and drove him from the proposed scene of his daily lair, and then left perpetual cards for the *piqueur* on the bark of trees, in the shape of scores run up on the point of his tusks, just to show him what he could do if he only caught his disturber. The assertion the huntsman made was as follows:—He had worked after this boar for several days, and had always harboured him; that is, he had traced him by slot and by *limier* to his lair, and then from his lair the following morning to his feed and to his lair again, until, as he declared, he had traced him from his feed to his lair on the Friday night, or rather on that Saturday morning, and, by a circuit ahead of him with the *limier*, proved that he had gone no further, and, therefore, that without the smallest doubt he could put the hounds upon him.

I am afraid that had I ventured, in conversation with my immediate friends at the château, to treat *piqueurs* and the *limier* with contempt, from the specimen of the servants I had seen, as well as from the dishonesty, unsteadiness, and bodily infirmities of the hounds, the size of the forest, the number and variety of animals it contained, and the nature of the ground. I should have received for answer an "Ah, ha, then!"

They were "to convince me" that morning of the "error of my national prejudice!"

Off we started, myself and Coco, fresh and in immense expectation of a rouse at the very lair of the *vieux sanglier*, when, on coming to a particular spot, all hounds in couples, we stopped in a stubble-field adjoining the forest, at the very place where the huntsman had marked the boar in. As soon as we came there, two or three of the so-called steadiest hounds were let go, who, of course, bolted off as usual in full cry, to excite their masters, and, in anticipation of the boar being at hand, to give him timely notice of their coming, as it would be dangerous to pull him too rudely out of bed. I am convinced that much of this babbling arises from fear of rushing too quickly on the boar, as well as from the custom of couples. At last, after the noise consequent on sudden liberty was over, the hounds settled to what in fox-hunting would be called a "stale drag" or stale line, and evidently, though with too much noise, carried it on through the wood; the instant they did this and maintained it, all the other hounds were slipped, who, of course, went off with a fuller cry still; and then old and young seemed to get together. With such a boar, and on such positive assertions from the huntsman, of course I thought it was all right, and

the more so when I heard M. Lucas say to M. E. Brunier—"Sound, sound!" On this direction, the latter gentleman rode off some distance under the cover, and then commenced long, loud, and apparently triumphant tunes on both the great French horns. I afterwards found that this was done to make the boar fly, and to put him off from a portion of the forest into which, I supposed, from its additional difficulties, they did not wish him to go. I kept down-wind of the cry, midway between the two masters of the hounds, when suddenly the excitement began to decrease; the horns ceased their tunes; and the cry of the hounds became more rational and less promising. In short, false excitement and consequent babbling seemed over with them; for all that reached my ear now was an occasional tongue, as of a hound on a line he could scarcely own. I could stand this no longer, so giving Coco the rein, I got through the wood just as the hounds came puzzling out on some cultivated land; and then I ascertained, alas! that, instead of having harboured the boar, this infallible *piqueur* and *limier* had made what in the French *chasse* is denominated a "*hollow bush*"—in fact, that *he had marked a cover with nothing in it,* and that, instead of having traced this old *sanglier* day and night to his lair and to his food, he was exactly *one day and night behind*

him. Instead of his going into that wood *after feeding* on the Friday night, he had gone through the wood *to his feed*, and slept somewhere else, as some of the best nosed hounds, backed by the ocular demonstration of his footmarks as well as the uprooting of his nose, proved, by tracing him to a field of potatoes. And here again was terribly evident to me the ignorance of the French huntsman. We marked him into the midst of a narrow valley, surrounded on two sides by the woods, and at either end by a village. We found where he had delayed some time in digging his potatoes, consequently the line after his feed ought to have been a little stronger than it was before it, and at least it would have served the hounds *as well.* To a certainty we had him on the open lands; to as great a certainty he had again left those open lands and entered the woods; the huntsman without the delay of one moment, therefore, should have held his hounds clear round the valley on the edge of the woods, and as he had hit him into the fields he must have hit him off, and he might eventually have come up with him. Instead of thus following the English plan, the whole establishment remained puzzling among the potatoes and on clover lands, as if they had been looking for a hare or even for a landrail; till at last the hounds showing a very

sensible inclination to try the nearest cover, an order was given and all the able hounds coupled up, the huntsman punching one's head with his fist, because, like "Punch" in a show in the street, he kept "popping his head" on either side, or in fact anywhere rather than into the middle of the noose. *Nothing was then to be depended on* but the two or three said-to-be old steady hounds, who were first put to "lead up" to the supposed boar, when they immediately gave tongue, backing each other into the woods, and when in the woods continuing their cry. Of course I supposed this to be all right; but no! *the gentlemen and the huntsman would not believe these said-to-be infallible creatures;* and more, because these hounds would not obey the call and come away, without sending some one if they were assuredly wrong, to whip them in, *they were absolutely left to follow the bent of their inclination, and still further to confirm themselves in error.* Leaving these hounds, and taking no more notice of their cry, we then made a retrograde cast, and of course in vain.

With many regrets at the failure of the day, and at all further inability to afford me sport (though there lay around us thousands of acres of the most beautiful lying, with a huge *solitaire* evidently not far off), my kind friends took their departure, leaving

me to the enjoyment of a crust of bread and some cherry-brandy, produced from the holster of my never-failing entertainer, M. d'Anchald, and to the mental resolution of writing a work on the French and English chase contrasted, with a prayer to the Emperor, humbly to be permitted to dedicate my book to him. Down then came the rain in torrents; —it had been sufficiently showery to wet us all to the skin; but, between cherry-brandy and the best great coat that ever was invented for warmth, repulsiveness to wet, as well as durability, made for me by Court Stephenson, of Great Marlborough Street, I was very comfortable, and proceeded to the château in a train of the following reflections.

The French servants, called huntsmen, that I have yet seen, know nothing of their calling. They don't love their duty and hate the wine and brandy flask enough to make them take the trouble they say they take to harbour a wild boar or wolf. Their masters put too much credence in them, and in themselves are ignorant as to the nature of the hound, and the best uses to which that nature can be put. They know nothing of condition; and as to shape and make, without the perfection of which a hound cannot go, they are equally deficient in knowlege. They never study the possibility of hounds being so matched

as to run in a body together, which alone would make them a match for an old wolf when they came up to him, and, by the distraction of numbers, better enable them to escape the charge or drive of a wild boar. And, lastly, on account of a little more expense, they will not maintain in their kennels a sufficient number of hounds, nor feed them properly: they halt, in fact, on that leg which makes their whole establishment in vain. I shall see more of this, I continued to myself, yet; but I allude to it in passing, that when my friends in France read my observations I may take them with me step by step, and, perhaps, at some future time, hear of, if I do not see, an efficient pack of foxhounds in the splendid new kennel in course of erection at the château. Everything at present is reversed. The best of men, the best of horses, a sufficient kennel, and the best animals of chase, but nothing approaching to even a moderate lot of hounds; nothing that can be called a pack; and no food that can put a hound in condition; all foregoing perfections are thus rendered utterly in vain.

Now, all that the French gentleman has to depend on is the gun; but the very roguishness and intelligent duplicity of his favourite hounds are for ever marring his possibility of a shot by keeping between

his gun and the hunted animal. I have already seen this and suffered from it; but as yet I can no more inculcate this knowledge into my woodland friends in France than I could teach it to a babe unborn. Would that, like Asmodeus, I could lift the trees of the forest as that devilish inspector or infernal *chaperon* did the roofs of houses; but, please Heaven, I would pray the power to be bestowed on only us two, "Le Diable boiteux" and myself. I should then have the means of showing to my friends the truth of all I urge as to the deceitful worthlessness of their French hounds; and they themselves would see the facts as they are known to me. A man cannot be up to the faults of hounds unless he has studied them in the open; the woods have blinded my younger friends' eyes; they are used to look on a noisy falsehood as a proclaimed truth, and on the front position of a lame and impotent, or even a legless cripple, slily and for a moment assumed, as a post gained by speed, power, industry, and determination.

On reaching the château, alas! with the deepest possible regret, I found news there that cast a gloom over the whole place, and in the morning ascertained that my friend had hastily quitted for Paris.

Left to my own resources, the next day (Monday) I availed myself of the yellow setter's sagacity, and

bagged both partridges, quails, and snipe; and, on the Tuesday, again sought the banks of the river, and, with the aid of rod and casting net, made up a dish of the coarser kinds of fish. These amusements, combined with my attention to the sick hounds, occupied my time, when, on the Tuesday afternoon, a messenger came to invite me to an attack on wolves; and with the greatest delight I heard that, to enable us to do so in strength, three packs of hounds were to join—those of MM. E. Brunier and Lucas, aided by the establishment of another master of hounds, with whom I had not as yet made acquaintance. Having to ride my horse to cover, I arranged all preliminaries for an early departure, and retired to sleep, most anxious for the break of day.

CHAP. X.

"Time hung not heavy, still I thought
On thy bright form, so dear and fair,
And in each perfum'd zephyr caught
A sigh — p'rhaps sent to seek me there!
Breath of thy lips — each sweet to me
Is but an essence stolen from thee!"

Berkeley.

After the foregoing failure of the attack on the huge Solitary, for a week I was thus left entirely to my own resources, my kind-hearted, attentive, and jolly companions kept from my company by a sad loss in their family. During these days I constantly attended to the hounds in their kennel, and very often fed them myself—too happy in seeing that, in all respects but one, their condition rapidly improved. The point in which time and means did not avail for success was in the cutaneous disorders, or complicated mange in their skins. With this, and on their present food, I could not deal severely enough,

my object being still to take them hunting in the forest.

With the handsome yellow setter called Medor, and a black-tanned water-spaniel nondescript bitch who pointed her game, I made intimate friends, and with them I frequently went for an hour or two each day in the little arable valley to kill some partridges, landrails, and quails. Jules d'Anchald told me that in the end of September and in October was the time that they found landrails most plentiful. Medor was one of the highest naturally-gifted dogs I ever saw. To the greatest possible sagacity he added the finest nose, with plenty of speed and a thorough knowledge of the haunts of game, and how to find them. Like some English dogs that have been in my possession, he seemed to know the likely spot in which the game would be found, and was perfectly certain of making his point. Once on game, he was caution itself; *and as a retriever he was perfection.* The black-tanned spaniel-like bitch was very heavy in whelp; but she always went with me, was very steady, and also a good retriever. On Medor's nose and power of winding even a snipe, nothing seemed to have any deteriorating effect. On days of the heaviest gossamer-fall I ever saw in any country, with the webs lying like skeins of white silk across his muzzle and

forehead, and so thick that they whitened the "aftermath" or long grass in the meadows, he would draw up to and stand a snipe as if on a fine but light-breezed day he had come on a large covey of partridges. At once Medor and I became intimately acquainted; language between us was not needed; a sign sufficed; and had I been in a country where there was much game, my bag had never been better. Thoroughly and utterly unbroke, all he did he did from a sagacious knowledge of what he must do to bring the gun to bear; and we never by any chance fell out, unless our beat took us down to the river. With Medor there it was the same as with the old French hounds in the woods—anything was worth hunting, however worthless when killed; and he would beat the bushes and swim after moorhens and dabchicks with as much pertinacity and delight as he would range for better game. This did not please me, and then only I had to chide him.

Thus, shooting for a few hours and fishing for a few hours, attention to the kennel intervening, I passed my time—my bag of partridges, landrails, quails, with an occasional whole snipe, being better than my basket of fish.

To show the sagacity of Medor, and his knowledge of my meaning, one afternoon I came in from fishing,

about half-past four, when game were on their feed, and at an hour when he did not expect to be taken out, and seeing him sitting by the kitchen-door as I went by to go to my room for my gun, I said, patting his head, "I shall want you, dear old man, in a minute." I then passed to the front of the house, and went up the chief staircase to my room, assumed my gun and game-bag, and, when I came out of my bedroom, there sat Medor, who could only have come in and up to my room the back way, waiting for me in the passage by my door.

On my return on Tuesday evening, I found the invitation from MM. Lucas and E. Brunier to join them the following morning, in an attack on a litter of wolves, in which, as I before observed, their hounds were to be assisted by the pack of a neighbouring gentleman; when, Coco being quite fit to go, I gladly embraced their considerate offer.

Having a long way to go to cover, I was on my gallant horse's back before seven in the morning, and, with a mounted groom to show me the shortest cut through the forest, I set off fully equipped for wolf or boar, and inhaling the sweet fresh breath of autumnal France, laden with unnumbered sweets, the fields by the river side beginning to be studded with the pretty pink crocus. The forked-tail kite and the

buzzard-hawk seemed to be as plentiful in these forests as they were in the woods, forests, and chases of Bedfordshire when I hunted the country; and when I first arrived at the château, I observed more than one specimen of the hoopoo. By walk and steady trot, through very rough paths, Coco contrived to "devour the distance;" and after some time I reached, and for a space continued in, the high road, where we had previously made a "hollow bush," when searching for the very litter of wolves which then again brought me into that vicinity. A few miles further I beheld several horsemen waiting on another road, and shortly after discovered three bunches of hounds—for I cannot better describe the animals strung to trees, tied by the heads together, and which in this portion of fair France are miscalled "packs of hounds." One circumstance alone delighted me, and this was that the pack (which I had not previously seen) belonging to M. Rambour consisted of more hounds, better looking, and in more able condition, than the others, and, I think, numbering eight or nine couples, among them some of the large rough hounds from La Vendée in Brittany, reminding me considerably of a bloodhound, save from their roughness and pied white colour. It is the fashion, or rather the neglect, of French gentle-

men never to round the ears of their hounds, and never did I see a country in which the rounding iron would have been of greater service. From the intense thickness and brambly nature of these enormous woodlands, every art which could protect the hound from punishment and render his passage more easy through cover should be resorted to. Hounds' ears are rounded to protect them from thorns. Having accounted for and assisted in regrets at the sadly necessitated absence of my kind friends, I beheld similar casualties occur among the coupled hounds, and similar severities indulged in by their attendants, as at the former meet, when this same litter of wolves was said to be harboured. A consultation between the three respective masters of hounds then ensued, and M. Rambour, who was mounted on a very clever animal, ordered his huntsman with three supposed-to-be-steady hounds to "attack the wolves."

There is a great deal of character in these hounds from La Vendée, and in their eyes and countenance a vast deal of intelligence. They are large, powerful, but heavy, with the usual fault in the generality of French hounds, the largest and worst feet I ever saw. Those that came under my observation could not help being slow; but, from the contour of their fine hound-like heads, and their large, or what is commonly called

double noses, I strongly suspect that the latter organ is very keen; and with judicious crossing and attention to shape and make, I should not have the least objection to the introduction of the blood, by way of experiment, in our English kennels. I know this description of French hound is sagacious and industrious, and I suspect that a fine nose is added to the other good qualities, though all is rendered abortive through mismanagement. The worst of it is, that, in so limited a visit as mine was to France, it was almost impossible to clear the face of the chase sufficiently of the multifarious and accumulated errors to have a distinct view of any virtues that might be latent in the French system; and as the method of man had taught every hound to babble or tell lies, it was almost impossible to discover which hound was inclined to be truthful and which was false, for all went off in full cry if their huntsman seemed to look down on the ground and wish to find a slot, a pad, or the line of some animal of chase.

M. Rambour's men were better appointed than the other servants I had seen; and there was, on foot, attending on his hounds, but in what capacity I know not, as fine a young man as ever I saw in any country. I must not forget that it was on this morning that I went up to the bunch of hounds belonging to M. E.

Brunier, and, patting the side of a white bitch whose stomach was full enough for going to bed instead of going to hunt, I addressed her huntsman thus: —

"Comment, est-elle grosse?"

"Mais non, Monsieur," said the servant touching his cap; "elle vient de déjeûner; c'est la soupe."

To translate it for some of my readers who may be still more deficient in French than I am, I asked the man, "If the hound was going to have puppies," though I well knew she was only distended from that morning's feed; and he replied: "Oh, no, she had been to breakfast; 't was the soup."

After the consultation before alluded to, the huntsman of M. Rambour selected his three hounds from their struggling, jealous, and baying companions, and proceeded into the forest on one side of the road with them in couples. While this was doing, about seventeen poachers, in blouses arranged themselves, with other sportsmen on foot, along the high road which here intersected the cover, so that nothing could pass in the shape of an animal without being shot at, or anything else that emerged abruptly through the bushes; for some of the blouses set themselves and their weapons like spring guns, aiming at weak places, or likely passes in the wood, for a pull at or a snap shot at any indication of life, before it could

be possible for them to define in what that vitality existed. As I went out of the highway, to see the hounds draw, I said to myself, "If we find, and I have to come back in a hurry, Coco shall jump that high road with a run, by way of safety." Well, we went some way into the magnificent wood, when, on reaching a given spot, M. Rambour dismounted and, I suppose, inspected the usings, the larder, or the lairs of wolves, for he gave the words for the three hounds to be slipped on the expected drag. On getting the word, my English brethren will guess my astonishment when I beheld the *piqueur* snatch at the couples, dragging the sleepy old hounds up and down as if he was mad and they deserved punishment by garotting, uttering to them all the time wild shouts of excitement, volumes of rattled r-r-r's, and little short French exclamations, which, I take it, if translated into dogpit and badger-baiting English, would mean, "high, hoo, poop, hallow, seize him, shake him, worry."

When he had thus shaken them up, into effervescence like ginger-beer or physic to be taken, and from pain and delirium the hounds had commenced fighting each other, he let them slip, and away they all went, blind from partial strangulation, tumbling against the bushes, and, of course, in the fullest

possible cry. In a moment or two, I suppose (for they were out of sight), from a variety of reasons, they all sat down, for there was a dead silence, and then, when they were fit to toddle on again, there was an occasionally-thrown rational tongue, evidently flung on the drag of some animal, no doubt the wolf. I sat listening to the variation of the line, till I thought that it must have crossed the high road, though not one single note on the horn indicated the fact. A French huntsman seldom plays his huge instrument except when he has nothing to do, and it can be of no possible use; so in this instance, guided by my ear, the hounds being over it, and of course the living spring-guns set the other way, I trotted into the beleaguered high road, and passed into the woods beyond. Oh, what fine wild darkly-delled woods they were! gloomy, I dare say, in the eyes of town-goers, but to me a land of promise. As I passed the road a glimpse showed me the struggling bunches of half-throttled hounds, most of them flinging their tongues too; so I made a mental note not to mistake their howls for the line of business. On we went, listening to the three old hounds, who now began to close with their animal and to run as fast as they could; at last a horn in their vicinity proclaimed the wolf, and called on the

distant *piqueurs* to let go their coupled-up packs; when, leaving and shirking all company, I dived on a line of my own down into the darkest and most intricate part of the wood, gave Coco to my groom, and then proceeded on foot for a hundred yards, and posted myself in a line with the approaching cry.

The three old hounds were running hard with a scent; but the avalanche of delirious animals now let go, without any scent at all, soon overpowered their cry, and came bellowing on like a flood of noise let out of a sluice, one behind the other, and in a continuous stream, diverging only as each hound fancied which was or was not the shortest way to the fun. Such a noise I never heard; instead of seventeen or eighteen couples — there could not have been more — they made noise enough for two hundred mouths, and little tomtits came chattering by, in terror, as if they thought the underwood bewitched. It soon became evident to my ear that the avalanche of hounds in more than one place had crossed wolves, and that a litter was on foot; for now the three old hounds kept on, perhaps with the old vixen wolf purposely leading them away, and the two other cries turned right and left, and one of them headed back for the high road. Presently a portion of the hounds came directly towards a new

position I had taken up, and crossed where I then stood, the wolf having passed before I got there. Bang, bang, bang, went three guns at intervals on beyond me, and then bang, bang, went two in the high road. A horn kept blowing triumphant tunes on and away; but nothing indicated what had happened in the road, and still there were three lots of hounds running hard. I would not move, for I thought, whatever the old wolf chose at her pleasure to do, the cubs would in all probability run rings.

The fact that had then happened was, that a vixen cub wolf had been killed in the road, and those hounds turned back after the rest. The different lines of scent then seemed to resolve into one; the horns kept blowing away a long distance from me; and an immense tail of hounds seemed to be hanging after the horn like the string of a kite, a long way behind. All at once I heard at the tail of all a most unintelligible row, the tongue of a hunting hound, yells, and growls, all proceeding from a single individual, coupled at times with a fearful shaking and tearing at the bushes,— the advance of this incomprehensible bit of woodcraft being at the same time very slow. Nevertheless, it came on right at me, so I prepared for whatever it might be. Perhaps it was a running fight, or sort of duel between hound and

wolf. Alas, it was nothing more than I had previously thought must often happen. It was a hound lugging along his couples, and fighting with the briars. Resting my gun against a tree, I tried to catch him, but in vain.

The cry then, save in one or two individual exceptions, died away; bushes began to crack here and there, and I caught glimpses of blouses making their way up; so, mounting Coco, I walked gently on, listening to the distant cry, now so far off that it came or ceased with the air that brought it. I was sitting in a ride, with my groom and two blouses, when it struck my ear that there was a very remarkable sullen bay proceeding from a single hound; it was a long way off, and between me and the distant line of chase. Occasionally a lighter tongue or two seemed to back the sullen bay, and, whatever those tongues were after, they shifted their positions, and seemed to be here, there, and everywhere. Thinking that there was something in it, I forebore all attention to the distant chase, and listened for nearer information, leaving the society of the two blouses, dismounting, and going on some little distance on foot. I had not left the blouses above ten minutes, when I heard that strange single sullen bay again, evidently nearer to the spot I had just left

than it had hitherto been; and then, as usual, a long silence. This was broken by the several reports of the guns of the two men I had left, but not a word was cried as to explanation. I kept my ground and listened; when wow-wow went the sullen bay again, a long way off. Wow-wow; it's coming again this way! I had taken up a position against a tree, where a long, straight, but very narrow path came down into the ride in which I had left my horse, and I was still listening for that bay again, when something silently flashed into the extreme point of the little ride up which I was looking, and came on directly towards me. That it was a hound I knew, from the whiteness of the coat I saw; but why was it occasionally so dark and so obscured, that a dim substance kept shutting out the whiter pie of the hound from my eyes? I stared at it, when all at once the oddest noise and sight that could be burst on my sylvan and astonished senses! Down the path, right for my legs, came a splendid cub-dog wolf, quite beaten, and by his side, and touching him, a powerful French hound, able to go twice as fast as the wolf, *but not daring to stop him*—the wolf going with his head very low, but his hind-quarters very high, his brush between his legs; and every bristle on his back set up the wrong way; his tongue

out, and his eyes flashing fire, while from his capacious jaws he emitted the fathers and mothers of all the snarls I had ever heard, by way of telling the hound to keep his jaws off. The hound kept growling at him, sometimes behind him, nudging his hindquarters with his chin—at other times alongside of him, licking his lips, and pushing his nose against the top of the wolf's neck, just as you see a dog do when he meditates pitching into another. All this done in a long heavy gallop, and beautifully illustrating my expressed opinion, that the reason hounds in France cannot catch a wolf is, that they do not come up with him in *force sufficient to roll him over.*

My gun was to my shoulder all this time, but I dared not fire, on account of the hound; in addition to which, the sight was so deeply interesting, I did not desire to terminate the fun till the very last moment. On they came till the wolf and hound were within two yards of my boots, when I suddenly raised one leg in the wolf's face, which made him dash on one side, clear of the hound, and I at once fired. The green cartridge never exploded, but like a ball it just went over his shoulder and missed him. He then crossed the ride behind me, going away aslant; and on the first opportunity afforded by the trees I rolled him over, when up sprang a blouse beyond,

and right in the line of my fire, and blazed into him. "How—he's dead?" I exclaimed in French. "Yes, sir," was the reply; when my groom rode in, and, as a matter of course with Frenchmen, hallooed at his mare, and flung the dead wolf on her crupper, where he strapped it—a thing it would have been very difficult for us to do with an English horse, even with a fox. My friend the blouse assisting in this, I rewarded him with something to drink, and in a short time was joined by M. E. Brunier and three or four hounds. Another cub wolf having been viewed, we waited, in expectation that the hounds would be brought back from their proverbially useless chase of the old wolf, but in vain; so, having again been hospitably refreshed by some bread and wine from M. Brunier's dog-cart, I proceeded on my way home.

It thus was made evident to me that a fine strong full-grown cub-wolf *was nothing near so stout before hounds* as a cub-fox of the same age; but, unless hounds ran together, though a hound could outpace and tire the cub-wolf, nothing but numbers dared to stop or pull him down. By this I naturally infer that the same circumstances are attendant on the old wolf, with the simple difference that, in proportion to the old wolf's fighting powers, more

hounds *must run together to assail and stop him. Unheld and untouched, though tired and slow*, of course he will "lop on" for ever, just as a fox would do, if the hounds did not kill him.

Not being able to hear anything of the old wolf's diversion, or, on her part, premeditated ruse to save her cubs, I continued slowly on my road home, when, on entering Neufchatel, a crowd of little boys soon followed the croup of my groom, on which was strapped the unconscious creature of their hereditary terror. Arrived at the town, I bade my servant lead to the best hotel, when he turned into what I took at first sight to be a hovel, but soon found out that it was the principal inn. The day having been a very long one for my horse, and as it was wearing late, I resolved, while he discussed a feed of corn, that I and my groom would dine; so, bidding him get what he liked, my very nice hostess appeared to take my commands in regard to my personal refreshment. Ducks were offered me, with soup and bouilli, and some fried potatoes. "Where is the duck?" I said, after my strange fashion, and with a glance at some waddlers enjoying themselves in a treacle-coloured puddle at the stable door. "*Là?*" I exclaimed, pointing to the living creatures. "Mais non, Monsieur. Là!" pointing to the house. "Où

est là?" I said; "permit me to see." So I was led to a cupboard, and to my joy beheld one cold, but already roasted. In a short time I found myself seated in the common room at a little table, my servant at another, and the sort of hashed duck and potatoes were excellent. I had some more fun with my hostess in finding out what it was best to drink, and then ended with cognac and coffee.

It was nearly dark after our hour's bait; so, finding Coco a little lame before, I proceeded at a foot's pace, my groom perpetually urging me to trot, and asking me if I was tired. "No," I said, "but my horse is lame. I am not tired; I do not think what is most pleasant to myself, I think what is best for my horse, so I will not go out of a foot's pace." This seemed to puzzle my attendant completely, and in passing through a little village he again rode up and asked to look at Coco's foot. This I permitted, when finding that to be case which I already knew, that there was nothing in the foot, but that the lameness proceeded from an old accident, I walked my horse quietly on, but soon pulled up to ascertain what on earth was happening to my follower. I could hear muttered imprecations, as well as little French expressions of entreaty, from the groom to his horse to stand still, all being drowned in the

recalcitration of hoofs, and exclamations of the villagers mingled with the loudest equine snorts. On returning for closer observation, lights came out of the cottages, and I beheld my servant sitting bolt upright on the mare's back, upon the girths, the saddle, with the wolf still attached, being under her belly. Having got Coco close to her, and caught her by the head, my groom dismounted and readjusted wolf and saddle, the mare submitting to it as if it was a matter of course, and of daily occurrence. It was after nine when I reached the château, having been on Coco's back for upwards of twelve hours.

CHAP. XI.

"Dark was the night, and weary too,
Still — still, dear love, I thought of you ;
Oh Sleep, again deceive me !
My head upon the pillow lay,
And accents dream'd of seem'd to say —
'If loved — then wherefore leave me ? '"

Berkeley.

On Thursday, which, I think, was the 18th, I did nothing but overlook the kennel. However, on that night the following occurrence happened. I had retired to rest, and was just falling asleep, when I was partly aroused by hearing what seemed to be the bellowing of a terrified calf. The noise appeared so close to the château that a sleepy notion entered my brain that it was Jules d'Anchald making the noise to induce me to the belief that the wolves were atttacking the cattle, and I was the more convinced of this when directly after I heard a peculiar cry as of the howlings of wolves, but not so distinctly as the noise of the calf, and then the calf again.

"Ah, ha!" I thought, very sleepily to myself, "Master Jules, I'm down upon the trick; you don't get me up to look out of the window! You've done the calf very well; but I can't say much for your wolves."

Having pronounced this sage judgment to myself, I turned round, pulled the bedclothes well over my ears, and fell fast asleep.

Before I was up on the following morning, Jules burst into my room with the following announcement. "The wolves attacked the calves in front of your window last night, and have bitten four of them severely: had we any hounds fit to go, we might lay them on the drag and hunt up to them."

"You don't mean that, my dear fellow; and I lay here comfortably in bed, thinking it was you. I heard the calves and the wolves so distinctly that I thought the noise came from one of the windows on this side the château."

It seemed that the calves had been left out in a meadow apart from the cows and oxen (a thing which ought never to be done), so the wolves had taken that opportunity of running a raid on the veal. They had been disturbed, however, from the cries of the calves reaching the farm-house, whence the people sallied forth and drove them away. On

inspecting the yearlings, never did I see four such wounds made only by as many bites, and all in the flank or hind quarters, each piece within the compass of the assailant's jaws being torn jaggedly away, to the amount in one instance of at least two pounds weight of flesh.

"What *is* the reason," I cried, "that, since I have been here, we have never had a wolf-hunt of our own?"

"Oh," replied my friends, "we did not know where to find them; they come a long way."

This assurance was no satisfaction to me, and it only tended to confirm my notion as to the animals that might be anywhere in these thick woodlands. After-observation convinced me that, often when we were hunting miles away, the best beasts of chase were lurking under the very windows of the château.

The following day — Friday — was so wet, that it was useless to attempt any sport; and on Saturday morning, again, though Jules and Maurice started at five o'clock, they could not harbour a boar. Nevertheless, wet as that Saturday was, they uncoupled the hounds and found a roe-deer, who, though the *limiers* could not find them, immediately introduced us to boars without end, and we ran boars and roe-deer in all directions. The few hounds we had

severed on different scents; and my friends and myself did the like, according as our ears served us. My pet Coco hated to be away from M. d'Anchald's horse, and we had had several contests about it, all of which of course terminated in my favour. Coco often refused to go any other way than after the horse he knew, and had a remarkable distaste to jumping any ditch into cover, though he never refused to jump out. At one time during this day the rain made such a noise through the leaves of the thick copse, that I was washed out of all hearing; so, seeing two little peasant boys, I called them to me, much to their terror, as they had probably never before seen an Englishman. To these boys I put some questions; and, while answering me, by way of shelter from the storm and my presence, they had crept beneath the bushes. They confessed to hearing a horn and hounds; so, availing myself of the direction they indicated, I gave Coco the hint to jump a ditch into the wood from the little meadow we were in, which he stoutly refused. Dear Coco's action, when he fought, consisted only of rearing and plunging, on which occasion, his mouth being so beautifully fine, I dropped the curb on account of his rearing, and took him on the snaffle; this always enabled him to bolt a short distance, when so in-

clined, before I could again check him with the curb. On witnessing the battle between the outlandish man, armed with a gun, and his fiery horse, the terror of the boys was increased; but their yell of dismay may be easily imagined when Coco, with a huge rear, and then a demivolt, bolted open-mouthed right among them in the cover. The use of their limbs was denied — they fell flat on their backs; and I could see their yelling upturned faces apprehensive of instantaneous death, as the spur made old Coco spring into the ride, up which I had resolved to go, without setting a foot on, or even touching, one of their limbs.

Soon after this I heard hounds running, and got up to them, and then M. d'Anchald, with a few more, joined me. These hounds left us again on hearing others running, and then we heard a gun, and soon after came up to Jules and Maurice, and, if I remember rightly, to my first acquaintance, who had met me in Paris, Ludovic, who had also joined us, and found that we were then running boars, and that they had met with an adventure. The three were on foot; and while standing in a ride listening for the hounds, the patter of the rain drowning all noise, they saw (at least one of their party saw) a dark object peep from the cover, which looked like a bird;

and then the surprise of one of them may be well imagined when, under cover of the rain and bushes, the snout of a boar almost touched his legs. He was so astonished that he failed to fire; but, crying out to Jules, towards whom the boar dashed, the latter fired into the boar with a cartridge which took no fatal effect, and might only have been serviceable if the hounds could have been got to hunt him. As it was, one or two took up his line; but, as French hounds are so apt to do, they gave it up on finding that they were not encouraged to go on.

We then began to get more together; and for some time it was impossible to know what the hounds were running, till Maurice got a shot at and hit a roe-deer, when the hounds, about three couple, began to run hard. In attending on these hounds, I saw them break away over an open piece of heather for another portion of the forest; so giving the "gone away" on my horn, I jumped old Coco over the fence out of the woods (a jump he was always delighted to accept), and joined the hounds in the fresh cover to which they had attained. As the deer had made a decided effort to reach these woods, I thought she intended holding them; so, getting on ahead, on hearing the hounds running really hard and directly towards me, I pulled up, ready for a

shot. Just as they had come close to me they headed back; and then, nearly two hundred yards behind me, going over the heather to the woods whence she had broken, I beheld the beautiful little doe. From Coco's back I took deliberate aim and shot at her—the barrel loaded with ball—but without effect. On this I gave the "gone away" again, and out came the six hounds, a very neat black pied bitch, from the Royal Kennels at Ascot Heath, leading; but being short of work, from having been shut up, she was as fat as a pig. Right merrily I cheered her on; and just as we got into the foiled ground again, my three friends, Jules, Maurice, and Ludovic, were coming out, having heard and understood my horn. Had they been three minutes sooner they would have met the doe upon the open heather. We then ran for some time in the foiled woods, and Maurice got another shot at the roe and hit her again, when she went away to fresh ground; and, to our intense delight, M. d'Anchald came up with the rest of the hounds. Oh, then, the doe being wounded, and three parts beaten, there was a merry cry! The old French hounds bustled along, expecting an easy victory, as well as they could; and the old worn-out foxhound bitches, particularly Blossom, raised their bristles and got young again. The

dying doe ran very short, and at last was pulled down by, I think—Saxon; at all events, he was one of the first who got hold of her. I then grullocked the doe and rewarded the hounds; and, putting the venison up on the crupper of M. d'Anchald's mare (the one that had carried the wolf), after a touch at the cherry-brandy flasks and a crust of bread, we went merrily home, delighted with the day's sport, and without a thread about us that was not saturated with the rain. A wet day in this part of France is a wet day indeed; and, from the height of my horse, as well as my own height, being obliged to stoop my head in galloping under the taller copse-wood, a sort of river ran in at the back of my neck, meandering coolly to the inner sole of either boot.

On reaching home we found that our friends the wolves—still making good my belief that any animals might lie anywhere they pleased in that thick cover without the huntsmen being aware of it—had come forth of the woods where they had so lately made a raid upon the calves, and in broad daylight in the afternoon carried off two geese from beneath the very windows of the château!

Monday, if I remember rightly, the rain continued, and we had no hounds fit to go. On Tuesday Medor's services were sought by me again, and I

bagged quail, partridge, and landrail; and when I returned to the château, discovered that an old servant of M. d'Anchald, who was at the present time keeper over a distant district of the forest, had sent to say that he knew of several wild boars, and among them a huge solitary of the largest size, upon whom he felt sure he could put the hounds.

On hearing this gratifying intelligence from a trustworthy man, Maurice d'Anchald, taking a *limier* with him, at once started for the little village in which the keeper lived, in order to assist in harbouring the boar for the following morning, while we looked to our guns and prepared everything for an early start, passing the evening in delightful anticipation of having to make in on my lord while seated in his terrible arm-chair.

CHAP. XII.

"Come, join me, then; a boar of age
Lies in his leafy lair;
Up, gallant hearts! and I'll engage
Each shall all peril share!"

Berkeley.

It was on a Wednesday that we left the château early in the morning for a little village in a distant part of the forest, whither Maurice d'Anchald had preceded us over-night, with a couple of hounds to be used by the old keeper and himself as *limiers* to harbour the veritable *vieux sanglier*, or old solitary boar, supposed to weigh from three to four hundred pounds. To ease our weak pack as much as possible, M. d'Anchald had wisely determined to take them to the fixture on wheels, having an open sort of spring waggon that would do for the occasion. I will here observe that when a boar is the game in view, wherever roads could be found to carry them, a nice covered spring van ought always to be at the service of the hounds, not only to save them as much as possible in long distances, but also for the purpose of car-

rying home any hounds that chance to be wounded; for to such casualties on these occasions the pack must usually be subjected. The two fine mares having taken on the hounds, we rode our horses to cover. On arriving at the little village we found the blouses assembled in force, and Maurice d'Anchald and the old keeper with mournful faces; for, on being asked if they had succeeded in harbouring the boar, they shook their heads, and, in addition to their report of being unable to slot one, they affirmed *that their limiers had failed to touch on anything, whether boar or wolf.* Blank, then, was the visage of my hearty entertainer; but in a few minutes a "sensation" was observable among the blouses; M. d'Anchald's brow lightened up; and on my making into the circle formed by the people around him, he communicated to me the glad tidings *that, in spite of the limiers,* a crafty poacher, *in the very woods wherein the limiers had made their rounds,* had slotted *le vieux sanglier* to his very lair, and by a further or circular inspection, ascertained to a certainty that he was still in it. There was then no doubt as to how the gun should be loaded, so I put two balls for close quarters into my left barrel, and a nicely fitting heavy one into the right for a longer shot. A consultation having been held as to the method of attack, my friend advised me to repair to

a narrow meadow, said to be a point for which the boar would assuredly make, as he had always done so from those woods; and though I doubted, when the direction of that point was indicated to me, if the wind for it on that day was fair, nevertheless, my doubts were overruled by advice of the most positive description.

No sooner had we commenced our passage through the village, the woods to which we were going being close by, and pervious to any noise, than the huge French horn began amusing itself with playing a "fanfare," very "exciting," no doubt, to us and the villagers, but not in the least calculated to lull the old *sanglier* in unsuspicious rest, or induce him to await our arrival. On my suggesting the inutility as well as disturbing nature of this noise, my delighted friends assured me that "the boar would not mind it a bit." "Odd," I said, "if he don't, if that which you have repeatedly told me is correct, about the noise of the hunting-horns being able to scare wolves and boars too, from any portion of the forest. However, we will hope that 'his lordship' sleeps soundly, or that position, draughts of air, or inequality of ground, will prevent the din from reaching him."

According to the positive instructions I received,

the hounds, with M. d'Anchald, Ludovic, and Maurice, and some of the blouses, went one way ; and myself, with Jules d'Anchald, one or two other French gentlemen, and a number of blouses, the other. On our road I begged Jules to come to some definite arrangement with so many guns as to taking post, so that I might know the line of the probable fire, I being the only one of this party who was mounted, and therefore likely to move about; besides which, as mine was an immensely powerful gun, I should not have liked to have fired unless I thought I had a clear range. Apparently my anxiety to come to so useful an understanding was misunderstood, and Jules taking up the idea of some of my companions, asked me in English, "if he should confirm their notions that I was a 'very nervous gentleman.'" This idea in no way suited my humour, so I replied, "Oh! no; on no account whatever give in to that delusion; but explain to them that I am not alarmed as to my own safety, but simply as to theirs; and by way of keeping them out of harm's way, assure them that I never think it possible that any man can kill me, but very possible that I should kill many of them, for I am so zealous for a shot that I fire in all directions at anything that moves, and hence my wish to know

where people are posted." A sort of understanding as to position was then come to, but in which I had not the slightest faith, when, on arriving at the little meadow where the boar was said always to cross, I discovered the wind to set from the meadow to the woods instead of the reverse; so, leaving my friends to suit their pleasure, I struck away to the right to seek a position nearer to the hounds, and better suited to the wind. I should here mention that while in the village, and previously to the start, I had discovered a little boy who jumped out of his boat-like shoes at the promise of money, and incased his feet in lighter materials, under pledge to stick to me for ever, or so long as I should require him to hold my horse. Having parted from my friends in the little meadow, I coasted the woods some way along the cultivated fields, when, on coming to an excellent landmark in the shape of a large tree in the middle of a field about a hundred yards from the wood, I dismounted and bade my small attendant stick himself under the tree with my horse for one hundred years, and to deposit his bones there unless I came for him, receiving a very serious "Oui, monsieur," in reply.

Having left Coco beneath this tree, which stood on such an eminence that I could see it from almost any

verge of the wood, I entered the thick forest, and, having proceeded two or three hundred yards into the cover, chose a spot where I could see beneath the oldest copse on either side for a considerable space. Having listened for some period for the first sounds of chase, the cry at last came indifferently to my ear, as the first outburst of it was down-wind of where I stood; and it was accompanied by M. d'Anchald's horn proclaiming at least "a boar." Oh how I regretted having taken counsel which put me up-wind of the hounds, as well as the animal they were hunting; and how I fumed and fretted as I heard the sounds of chase die away, and, though they came nearer again, still decidedly hang in those portions of the wood that were down-wind! D'Anchald's rich loud cheer reached me now and then, but it seemed to me as if the hounds slackened rather than freshened in their cry, and as if he cheered or encouraged them more and more. I knew, also, how weak-handed the pack was in point of men to work with and keep them together: when, overcome by my old propensities as to assisting hounds, I resolved to tarry where I was no longer, so with a rush I left my post, as I supposed, in the direction of Coco. Alas! in changing my position, and in listening to the hounds, I forgot each point of the compass, and instead of going

for the outside of the forest, I plunged into its very depths, till I no more knew where I was than if I had been dropped by a balloon from the fleecy clouds above me, but which I could not obtain a view of from the mass of foliage that intervened. One previous observation alone then stood me in stead; I knew the little meadow, in which I was advised to post myself, was on the lowest level, and that the forest ascended from it. Ah ha! there, in the midst of the forest, I stumbled on a water-course, so getting into it I followed its direction; and oh, how I stopped and admired! I came full on the spot where on some hot day the *vieux solitaire* had lain to cool himself and wallow in the mud, and splendid his dimensions were, for he had left an impression, the models of gigantic hams. According to my expectation, the water-course brought me to the very spot where I had diverged in another direction from my companions; and in a few moments I was in the fields in sight of Coco's tree, and soon on his splendid back, informing my little attendant that he deserved death for permitting my steed to choke his bit up with grass, and that for the rest of the day he was delivered over to his own inventions—to all of which he replied with a civil and serious "Oui, Monsieur."

Oh! but it was beautiful to hear the cry of the

running hounds, and to catch a view of them, as I very soon did, as they crossed a ride just ahead of my horse. This, wherein I first saw them, as well as all the other rides, was leaguered with blouses, to each of whom I put the question as to "what it was the hounds were running," but not a soul of them could answer the question. At last as I came back with the hounds into those portions of the woods again, I met M. d'Anchald, who cried out, in reply to my interrogation, "It is a boar: I have been close to him: it is the old *solitaire* himself." Shortly after this, as I was making up to one of those voluntary sort of half bays which a wicked old boar, when pursued by so few hounds, will bring himself to, I met old Blossom cutting the matter very short, and coming back to me for aid with all her bristles up. The sooner this bad example was met, the better; so, well knowing that it would be useless for me to attempt to come up on foot with a boar, with all his running in him, I got my horse as near to him as I could, and with horn and holloa cheered on the little pack, and made the boar take to flight again. And here, all day long, I had fresh evidence of the mischief done by those skirting, babbling, crafty old French hounds. They were never with the pack, always hanging for or in a ride, or dodging about to get a temporary

lead, which they only wished to keep till the boar had come over a ride in which they thought he might be shot, or could keep till the honestly working hounds had overtaken and run over them, when the same dodging, shifting, and skirting would be acted over again

Often and often I got well ahead of what I knew to be the working and leading English foxhounds, making every allowance for the boar being, which I knew him to be, immensely on in front, and heard the boar coming to me, when as often I heard "Wow, wow, wow" — some cunning old skirter, who had been dodging my gun in the bushes, or hanging for the ride, had headed him and put him right away from me; when, oh! how I prayed for a day of retributive justice with the kennel ropes! At last the rings in the cover taken by the old *solitaire* became wider; and from positions gained by me a long way in advance, up to which the hounds rather coldly hunted, I became painfully impressed with the fact that *le vieux sanglier*, weight and all was distancing us, and that, unless M. d'Anchald and myself made immense exertions to encourage and keep the jaded hounds together, Blossom's example would be followed by others, and we should soon have to leave the boar still master of his wilderness. Seeing this, I

left off thinking of a shot, and devoted myself exclusively to the hounds. The chase now brought me to the verge of a cultivated valley, old Coco coming over the little fence from the wood into the fields with a joyous swing, and running almost against a peasant with his team at plough.

Immensely excited, and pointing some little distance up the narrowest portion of the little valley, to where the forest again crowned the heights, the man cried, "The wolf! the wolf! — the great wolf there!" "Oh," I cried with vexation, "the boar!—have you seen the boar?" "No, no," he shouted, "no boar; but the wolf — the wolf — away across the valley and up into the woods beyond!" What was I then to do? Not half an hour previously to this I knew the hounds were on the boar; yet they kept running hard for the spot indicated by the peasant.

But hark! they turn away more in the woods again, so into the woods I followed; but in a short time they showed an inclination for the little valley, and before I had again gained the field, the change in the sound of the foremost tongues gave me well to know those tongues were flung in the open, and when I emerged from cover I found we were on the very spot pointed out as the line of the wolf. "Well," I cried to myself, "boar and wolf,

as well as fox and hare, may break at the self-same spot; if all is correct that my French friends say, as to the scent of a wolf being the lightest and worst scent there is—a fact I confess I have ever doubted—the hounds will never change from the tremendous scent they have been running to one pronounced to be so cold; so let them go;" and "Away! gone away!" I gave on my English horn, and cheered them merrily up the opposing bank.

They had run for a field or so along the valley, and well and beautifully Coco flew two fair hedges with but little ditch, and then into the woods once more. The hounds now tailed immensely, and, long after we had crossed the valley, I could hear the old French *fainéants* flinging their tongues, and dwelling, howling, and tying, on the line in the woods we had left. And now came another lesson, had my friends been there to learn. In rather an open part of the forest we came to a check, with the four or five able English hounds at a momentary loss.

At this instant the old lag-behinds down in the valley sent up a volume of tongue, and very nearly took the leading hounds back again; but, calling them to me, I held them on, and luckily in the right direction: they hit the scent, whatever it was; crossed a young spring; and again and again I gave on my

horn the points of chase, with cheers that I thought would have led on the Demon Hunter of the Hartz Mountains. In going up a narrow ride my fine old horse slipped into a deep rut, and, at half speed, came on his head; a large grower, in the scramble, forcing itself under my knee: but we got no fall; and the hounds running close to my side, all kept on, merry as a marriage-bell. In five minutes more, the hounds and myself burst out of the wood together, and a fine wide vale of cultivated land lay right before me, over which I hoped we were about to sail, "Away! gone away!" again on my horn, as a beautiful foxhound bitch, Barricade, stooped her head, arched her back, dropped her stern, and scuttled away as if resolved on blood, with about four or five English foxhounds backing her.

Without overrunning the scent a yard, they threw up; for, whatever the animal was they were then hunting, it had been headed by a man and cart in the high road, and the hunted animal had, as the French term it, reversed its foot—or, in our phrase, turned short back upon the line. Standing stock still I let them alone, and saw Corbeau make a splendid hit *back*, and do a thing which fools would very likely have thought was running heel. I knew better however, so cheered them on to the echo, and saw

them hit it well into cover. This slight check in the open had afforded me time as well as space in which to ascertain what it was I was hunting; so having inspected the lands, alas! there was no sign of the slot of the weighty boar—it must then be a wolf.

No possibility, however, of stopping the hounds, for they were again in cover, and running a little distance within it, but parallel to the open country; so I coasted the wood and came into the high road, up to which, at this spot, the woods adjoined. The cover making an angle, I soon rounded it, and got into the fields again, when out came the foxhounds with a lively fling, and, St. Hubert be praised! they flew away for the very wide valley.

Away, and away, away! went my horn; although I well knew that I could stop the hounds, after their hard work, and in their indifferent condition, however, the sooner some one came in sight the better. At this moment shrill screams, or what might be view-halloos, reached my ear from the open fields ahead, when, as I came up hand over hand with the leading hounds, I was met by a girl and boy frantic with excitement, and screaming "Le loup! Le loup!" while they pointed in the direction they had seen him go.

"Oui, le loup!" I cried as I kept crossing the headmost hounds and chiding them; and when their heads were all up, I called them in the contrary direction.

"Non, non!" shrieked the girl, hair dishevelled, and in such agitation as I scarce ever saw; "not that way! Oh! you do not understand—here is the wolf, here, here!"

"Yes, I do understand," I rejoined; "I know where the wolf is, but I want the boar:" when, having got the hounds together, I trotted off to a portion of the forest about the spot where I suspected we had changed. As I went back, I saw two of our old useless French hounds sitting outside the cover on their haunches, with their heads up in the air, howling, while three or four others at intervals came bellowing on the line. St. Hubert befriended me. I had never been in this part of the forest before; but with an instinctive knowledge of the ground, as luck would have it, when I was not a hundred yards from the spot where I intended to enter the woods in an attempt to recover the wild boar, a tall man in a blouse rushed into view to meet me in joyous excitement, shouting, while he pointed with his hand in the direction of the open country whence I had come,

"Le loup est parti là-bas!"

"Oui," I replied; "mais où est le sanglier—where is my boar?"

"Ici, ici," he said, beckoning me to follow him down a little path, "ici, monsieur; I will show you his foot."

Off he ran best pace; when at the very spot at which I intended to commence my cast, about twenty yards within the wood, he stopped so short, that I was almost over him. He had gone down on his knees with his finger on a spot, beneath which, to my joy, I beheld the huge slot of the solitary, going in the same direction, but about two hundred yards wide of it, in which I had already run the wolf. Turning Coco's head to give the hounds the right inclination, the instant one spoke I cheered them, hat in hand, upon his line. Giving four single notes upon my horn to tell my friends wherever they were, that I was still upon the boar, I then rode as near the hounds as the paths would permit, to cheer them on together; and in ten minutes, in the midst of a strong young spring of copsewood seven feet high, they were right upon the boar, who, I could hear, threatened them from him at a walking bay.

Several times he made the circuit of this tangled and heavy copsewood, showing an evident inclination to cross about fifty yards of younger spring into some

old high copse on its other side, which, from my previous passage through it with the wolf, I knew terminated in the open country. Of this high cover the fields were on two sides, and young springs on the other two; so, could I but get the old *solitaire* into that quarter, and my friends came up, a victory was perfectly certain. Alas, the point to which he and I were willing to go was up-wind, so that two or three times he winded me, and headed back; for, hoping for a slant of wind that might avail me, I several times went into the thick cover to meet him, and obtain a close-handed shot. So near did he come, that I could distinctly hear the passage of his powerful shoulders through the underwood; and when he caught my wind I heard him make the same loud snort that tame pigs often make when suddenly disturbed in a farm-yard — with this difference, that the blow or snort of the wild boar convinced you of the greater power of his lungs.

When at a walking bay, the boar will avoid the huntsman, if he catches his wind; but, when seated doggedly resisting all attacks in his arm-chair, and resolved on fighting, then, if he catches your wind, he will be safe to charge. After playing at this game for a considerable time, and cheering the hounds up to their work, M. d'Anchald came up, and together

we aided the hounds. I still maintained my up-wind side of the cover, while M. d'Anchald worked with the hounds towards the down-wind side, for I knew that in the latter direction all my companions must be continually arriving, and down-wind of us he could not go; but up-wind there was nothing save myself to prevent his slipping away, and not a soul to view him had he done so. Had we but had an able body of hounds sticking to their work, I would have availed myself of a position better suited to the ear; but, as no one was on my side the cover, I deemed it better to remain.

After we had been running in this immensely strong spring some time, the old false cripples began to come up and do all sorts of mischief as usual, flinging their tongues wherever they were, and distracting attention from Barricade and the English hounds who were really at work. So confused had become the cry, and so weak around the boar, that I feared we were going even then to be beaten; at last, I heard the faint report of a gun at the far end of the cover, but not one single note of the huge horn to tell me what had happened. Had the boar then been shot at, and headed back, or was the gun fired at him as he broke on the reverse of his foot, or on the old line? I stood doubting what to do, and

listened for further news. Hounds of some sort seemed running from the report of the gun towards me, but in vain I listened for the foxhounds whose voices were known to me; so, resolving to clear the matter up, I sped for a better wind. Oh, how angry I was when I found that the entire cry left in the thick copse proceeded from the rogues and cripples! and when I reached that end of the cover wherein I had hit off the boar, not a soul was to be seen—all, all were away, and, worse than away, still down-wind of me; and not a note of the now wrongfully silent French horn reached my ear to give me information. I saw, however, the footsteps of M. d'Anchald's horse, evidently going fast, and on those I followed the thick over-lapping boughs of the old copse, under which my splendid horse ducked his head, leaving me to take care of them above, rattling on the hard front of my hunting-hat like hail, the occasionally larger ones making raps like distant fire-arms, and leaving me for the moment in doubt if I did not really hear more than one shot.

Nothing would induce Coco to let a grower catch his reins or meet his throat; he would, at half speed or at full trot, stoop so low to avoid it, that at first it seemed as if he was falling on his head. He was the best and quickest horse I ever rode through

cover, and my brother huntsmen in England will know how much difference there is in horses through cover, and will be well aware of the advantages. At last with a rush, and with every variety of specimen of the forest foliage stuck in my belts and boots, saddle and stirrup-irons, we came out into the open country, and then we raced in the direction where I expected the fun was at the full. I had rounded a corner, and was flying the shortest way to another bend of the wood, when I saw an object standing under a hedge. It was motionless and dyed with blood, and I knew it to be a hound. The object stood in my way, and as I passed I beheld poor Barricade, one of our best fox-hounds, split or ripped open apparently from flank to head on the right side, the blood in a jet as thick as the little finger still pouring out from behind the ear.

I never saw so miserable an object—her beautiful face so different in expression to what it was when I had cheered her in the run; unable to walk, she seemed to stand up transfixed with pain; so, fearing that more mischief might be going on while I was away, I cried to a peasant, who was standing close by, "Le pauvre, pauvre chien à vous!" pointing to her at the same time with a look of pity; and again I plunged into the woods, the peasant directing me with his hand. At last I came out on the side of

the hill of the cover, up which I had cheered the hounds when they first broke, and in the young spring I beheld two groups of men, and at once, with a deep sigh of regret, became aware that the boar was killed. There he lay outstretched in the centre of about twenty blouses and others, with M. d'Anchald and Ludovic standing over him, Jules and Maurice, with the hounds in couples, a little apart. The boar, after being so repeatedly headed by me, reversed his foot and went right back the line on all his foes, who were coming up to my horn. He was, therefore, cut off from crossing the little valley, over which he had at first broken, and obliged to turn to a running sort of bay in some very old hollow copsewood, where the guns could easily and openly be brought to bear. Maurice saw him catch poor Barricade on his tusks and fling her up into the air, charging her again ere she could recover herself, though, from the continuous nature of the wound, I believe it to have been done at one blow.

The boar received eight balls from M. d'Anchald, Maurice, and Ludovic, and M. d'Anchald's groom, before he died — topping the fence of the wood like a greyhound, with seven balls in him, and falling at last from a ball fired by Maurice, as he jumped the fence, which struck him behind, and raked clean up into the

vital parts. One of M. d'Anchald's balls was delivered as the boar came almost into his waistcoat, and it broke the under-jaw, and turned the *sanglier* from his charge. A more splendid creature to look at I never saw. From his small and, for a boar, beautifully shaped head to his tail he was as straight as a line, small close set-back ears, enormous shoulders, loins, and hams, and short legs, with a body well let down and low. In short, as a prize boar in shape and make, he might have been shown anywhere. He looked from the length of his coat and his stiff bristles quite as large as a good-sized bear, with white tusks of the most formidable dimensions, weight above 350 lbs. "Well," I said, "the fortune absolutely to kill him was not mine; I must therefore be content with the knowledge that, but for me, there would have been no victory; for at one time the hounds were clean away on a wolf, and the boar was lost; none else were there to see or remedy the error. And now for poor Barricade." We went under my direction to search for her, when she was met, walking slowly and in a fainting condition, and brought to the little village. As to *le vieux sanglier*, he was soon slung on a pole, and borne by the blouses to the little inn, the horns playing all the way the "Death of the Wild Boar."

CHAP. XIII.

"How, how, boys how! fill high the cup,
The Boar on the board before us.
We'll drink the best — fill up, fill up,—
Not a sad thought now comes o'er us!
The wine of France in bowl shall dance,
While we sing in lusty chorus!"

Berkeley.

On reaching the little inn in the village, as described in the last chapter, the body of the magnificent *sanglier* was flung on the table, and the old keeper set to work to disembowel him, and take out the fry for immediate consumption by the blouses—to which savoury viands M. d'Anchald added bread and a sufficient quantity of wine. Again it fell to my lot to witness this most unworkmanlike way of taking the inside out of a carcase, so unlike the neat and cleanly method adopted by us in regard to deer of each sort. Had I the management of a pack of hounds used for boar, at the croup of one of my servant's horses there should be carried a short stout

stretcher of sufficient length, with a notch at either end to sustain and extend the hocks of the boar, also a stout cord. By these means I would haul up the carcase of the boar to the bough of a tree, as near as possible to the spot where he was killed, and then and there, while the hounds were yet warm with their triumph, I would reward them with the entrails and paunch, having first shaken the body and head of the boar at them and roused their animosity. *After the hounds* had had their immediate triumph, *then reward the men or those* who can afford to wait, and let the boar be carried, much lighter for the good he had done the pack, to any place that was desirable. Masters of hounds hunting the boar and wolf would do well to remember this *most important fact.* Hounds cannot triumph over the boar without man's aid, nor over the wolf, unless the pack is numerically strong and up to the mark in constitutional ability or condition. Therefore, man must reward the hounds on the bodies of their slain animal, as they cannot reward themselves.

Before the old keeper had gained possession of the fry, word was brought me that poor Barricade had been carried into a neighbouring cottage, and in her aid I called up every knowledge of or skill in wounds that I possessed. She was, of course, very weak from copious

hæmorrhage, and a languid flow of lukewarm arterial blood still kept falling from behind the ear; while the ear itself, on account of the pressure of the couples in which she had been led, was swelled to an enormous extent from extravasated blood within the skin. The commencement of the frightful wound was very luckily *on* the hindmost rib. Had it been behind the rib, instead of on the bone, poor Barricade would have been killed upon the spot. A deep incision, laying bare all the ribs as it passed over them, thence continued till the tusk had penetrated behind the top of the shoulder-blade. Behind the blade-bone it had gone to a considerable depth, but come out again at the top on the side next the neck, and then, running upwards the entire length of the neck in a deep gash, the tusk seemed to have entered still more deeply just behind the ear, where it had wounded one of the arteries. Having called for needles and thread, and slackened the couples to see if that would reduce the accumulation of extravasated blood, I commenced by securing the deep puncture at the back of the ear; and, that having been successfully accomplished, then commenced the sewing up from the end of the wound on the hindmost rib. It ought to be the custom of all masters of boarhounds to take out with them needles proper for this purpose; but none being at

hand, I selected two from the possession of the good dame belonging to the cottage, and having armed them with some strong thread, I commenced stitching with either needle above and below. And here let me counsel all sportsmen, when dealing with a wide superficial wound of this description, always to have two needles and two threads, and to tie the edges of the skin thus alternately together, rather than, by stitching across with one needle and thread in the usual manner, to risk one fracture letting out the entire ligature. If tied, as I recommend, with separate threads, if several give way, still enough remain to assist the designs of nature, room being always left between the stitches in the first instance, to admit of a free discharge or suppuration. So extensive was the wound, almost the entire length of the hound, and so much nicety did it demand in taking care to catch up nothing with the needle save what was intended to be the protecting skin, that for nearly or quite two hours was I kneeling at Barricade's side, M. d'Anchald and his sons having enough to do to keep the doorway sufficiently clear of curious faces to admit me light.

By the removal of the couples the extravasated blood within the skin subsided, and, the operation being over, I had the heartfelt satisfaction of giving

the patient a draught of fresh cold water, which she lapped with the greatest relish. So carefully had I brought the skin of this extensive wound together, that when Barricade was invited to walk to a stable, she did not show the least symptoms of stiffness in the motions of her limbs. Having done all in my power to assuage her sufferings, I then went to the little inn for some mulled wine and a crust of bread.

In talking over the events of the day, it turned out that, besides this old boar, there were no less than three wolves in the woods where we found him, although the *limiers* gave notice of neither of the larger game; and, what was funnier still — be it remembered that this was on *Michaelmas-day* — Jules d'Anchald and one or two of the blouses came upon a wolf, despite the noise of the horns and cry of the running hounds, in the act, and in broad daylight, of coolly eating *his goose;* and I was told they got the goose before life was quite extinct. While I was attending on the hounds, and enjoying this really fine day's sport, Jules, accompanied by a blouse, were taking up a position in a likely pass; and while endeavouring to select a good ambush, the blouse seeing a patch of bushes and long grass on the edge of a hole in the surface of the ground at some little distance from Jules, proceeded to install himself in it.

When seated in the hole, having made himself comfortable, he stretched out his arms in order to clear a view, and parted twigs and long grass, when, oh horror!—or rather excitement and horror!—at the very same moment a huge wolf, no doubt wishing to occupy the grassy hole with an idea similar to that in the head of his foe, peeped into the bushes from the outer side, and met the blouse, not only *vis-a-vis*, but absolutely nose to nose! It is impossible to say which was the most astonished, the man or the wolf; but the former, clutching at his gun, let it off, and the wolf, unharmed, leaped clean over the barrel of the aimless firearm, and vanished in a cloud of smoke, followed by a much better directed volley of oaths at his escape from the startled and disappointed gunner, who continued to rattle out r-r-r's and blasphemy for the space of half-an-hour, mingled with regrets at the loss of the reward paid by the government for any wolf's head.

As it is always pleasing to me to tell of a gallant act in a brother sportsman, let him be of whatsoever rank or country he may, I will narrate one of the old keeper whose faithful report brought us upon this boar. If I remember rightly, he was at that time living as huntsman with a gentleman, and his hounds had brought a solitary old boar to bay. In making

in on the boar, the boar got his wind and charged; the keeper's single gun missed fire. The boar of course threw him down, and at one blow of his tusk laid open his thigh, hip, and back with a frightful gash, passed on, and then was brought to bay again. The man arose, nothing daunted, and, repriming his gun, hobbled up to the scene of conflict, sighted the boar in his "arm-chair," and fired; the boar attempted to charge, but, having been mortally wounded, made but one spring, and fell dead, just as the man sank down and fainted from the loss of blood. They were found in this state, and almost touching each other.

Having got the hounds into their waggon, and placed some straw to support poor Barricade—but not till it was quite dark—we proceeded home, and arrived time enough for a late dinner, strict injunctions having been given by me that the utmost Barricade should have to eat would be a little sopped wheaten bread.

The following morning I went to see the huge *sanglier* skinned and cut up, when, as usual, I found him laid on a table, and the groom and boiler hacking at his skin with blunt knives, leaving quantities of meat still attached to the skin when severed. Having drawn my hunting-knife, I offered it to them; after

a trial or two they pronounced it too sharp, and went on with their clumsy operation.

"Why don't you hang the boar up by the hocks," I said, "and so have the carcase at advantage?"

"Oh no; we never do."

"I know it," I rejoined; "but why don't you?"

"Oh, it's never done," was the similarly sensible reply.

"Look!" I cried, "you are spoiling my wild boar trophy! Why don't you occasionally drop the knife when the integuments will yield to the thumb-nail, and force of the arm, and skin all that you can so skin in that way?"

"Oh, we can't; the boar's skin is too tough."

"Nonsense," I replied, pulling up the skin and separating a portion of it from the flesh in the most approved manner, by way of demonstration. "There," I said, "if you had the boar suspended by the hocks, you would make a much better job of it."

"Oh no, we never do: he will not skin in that way."

"Did you ever try?"

"Oh no, it is never done."

"Lord," I said to myself, "I wish I was master, I'd soon put some new ideas into you;" when, finding all further argument useless, I went into the kennel

and sat in the lodging-house with the hounds out of the rain, for it was a very wet day; and there discovered my terrier, Knipper, sedulously and affectionately engaged in licking Barricade's wound, and pulling out the stitches it had taken me so much trouble to put in. They had not even the precaution to put this poor creature by herself; but left her to climb on and off the bedstead, as she could, and to walk the whole distance of the yard for a drink of water. On this I sought my friends, and stated that it was as much as Barricade's life was worth to let her continue in the kennel; so, after some consideration, M. d'Anchald bethought himself of an old stable, into which we inducted the sufferer, her bed being on the ground, and her water within easy reach. Having seen her thus more efficiently housed, my last injunctions were to let her have nothing but bread and a little weak soup, until I had seen the amount of fever or otherwise which might supervene, thinking that from the great loss of blood she might perhaps require a little support to induce an ample and healthful action. However, the soup and bread, with her young and vigorous constitution, were sufficient for every purpose, and with a dressing of aloes, though I forget the French term for it, the wound and the hound progressed beautifully.

On the next day, Friday, I killed partridge and landrail, and on the Saturday, with horror at the idea, shrunk from accompanying my younger friends, who proposed to take out my splendid bloodhound-bitch Malwood, whom I had brought with me and sold to M. d'Anchald, for the purpose of exercising her, *and entering her at hare.* As yet she had never been entered to a scent of any sort or description. All my assertions that they would spoil the bitch were of no avail; nothing could induce them to believe that unsteadiness, inculcated by entry at many scents, would tend to make her not trustworthy, and the more so as they intended her for a *limier.* They were resolved to maintain their essentially French ideas and misconceptions as to hounds, and away they went to a place where they said they should only find the lesser game.

Out of curiosity, I took the trouble to ascertain the hounds they were to take with them *to teach this splendid young hound to hunt,* and to my continued wonder they took the little babbling harrier, and one or two of the old powerless, false, and skirting cripples, and in such company Malwood was put to begin her hunting life. As usual, my friends having settled the fact in their own minds that they were to find nothing but a hare, or at most a roe-

deer, stumbled into the midst of a litter as well as a band of wild boars; and instead of a hare, by the grace of the watchful St. Hubert, the first scent Malwood opened on was that of the larger game, and a friend of Ludovic's killed a little sow from out a litter. After I had returned from bagging partridge and snipe, I heard their approaching horn sending on the intelligence that they had "slain a boar."

On the Monday following Jules and Maurice, with their *limiers*, went out to try to harbour a boar, but, as usual, without success; and when M. d'Anchald and myself joined them, the rain came down so heavily that we returned home without uncoupling our hounds. Word having been sent by the old keeper with whom we killed the solitaire that there was another boar there of a larger size, it was agreed to rest on Tuesday, to attack him on the Wednesday; so on Tuesday I went the round of the kennels, and, not having seen Barricade for a day or two, and finding that no one had paid her a visit, I suggested to M. d'Anchald that we should do so. Our chagrin was mutual and excessive, when, contrary to all the directions I had given, we found shut up with her a bucketful of the thickest barley-meal and horse-flesh, mixed about half and half. M. d'Anchald shouted for the old boiler, and asked him the mean-

ing of such conduct, when he received for reply, "Oh, he thought the poor thing might be hungry in the night, and it would do her good to have as much strong food as she could eat." Nothing seemed to be said to him as to disobedience of orders; and, to my astonishment, nothing could be doing better than the hound; so, having seen the bucket taken away, we obeyed a suggestion to visit Saxon, the great young able bloodhound I had previously sold to M. d'Anchald, for he was at last supposed to be not quite well. To my horror, I found him in the very last stage of the most virulent attack of the yellows. So jaundiced was he, and the system so much suffused and affected, that his gums, the whites of his eyes, the inner side of his lips, the inner sides of his ears, beneath his elbows, the skin of the abdomen, and his flanks, were of a deep yellow colour. His eyes were sunken and blurred with matter, and he was so wasted away and weak, that he could scarcely stand.

"It's all too late!" I exclaimed, on seeing the state he was in; "but you run and fetch me what calomel you have."

"Calomel, we have none."

"No calomel! why, what on earth do you give your servants if their livers are out of order?"

"Salts."

"Calomel I must have; so send and get some."

It was then arranged that we should go to Prèmerie to procure it at the chemist's, with whom I wished to hold some communication, through M. d'Anchald as my interpreter. Arrived there, I introduced the subject of calomel, and received from the chemist a suggestion if I needed that medicine myself, he should administer to me a gentle quantity in the shape of fourteen grains.

"Fourteen grains!" I exclaimed; "why that would kill some people in England."

"Oh, no," he said; "I would give twelve grains to a child in arms."

Then there must be some difference between the strength of the English and French preparation, I thought; when our conversation ended by my getting a good supply of the calomel he had.

Returned to the château, I at once administered to Saxon fourteen grains, which was eight grains more than I had ever given in one dose; then some syrup of buckthorn the following morning; and then again at night ten more grains of calomel; and so on for several days, alternating between the two medicines, and supporting the patient with good warm broth and sopped wheaten bread; and to my utter

astonishment the hound recovered. I do not hesitate to say that the recovery of Saxon and Barricade was the most extraordinary fact of the sort that ever came within my experience. Barricade never had a bad symptom, and Saxon was absolutely snatched from the jaws of death.

On Tuesday night we retired early to rest, feeling sure we could rely on the report of the old keeper that on the following morning he would introduce us to the boar, which he pronounced to be one of four hundred pounds weight.

CHAP. XIV.

"I would not escape from Memory's hand
For all that the eye can view,
For there's dearer dust in memory's land,
Than the ore of rich Peru.
I clasp the fetter by memory twined,
The wanderer's heart and soul to bind."

Joanna Baillie.

The Wednesday morning having arrived, we set off for the village in which the old keeper lived, in great anticipation of sport, the more so as we thought that perhaps MM. Lucas and E. Brunier would be there with their hounds to add to our strength. On our arrival, however, we discovered the keeper and a large number of blouses with their guns assembled to meet us, but no other hounds; so we had to attack with such means as the kennel at home afforded. Great, however, was our joy on learning that the large boar had been tracked to his lair and safely harboured. On wending our way through these endless woods, to my horror I heard what I took, from its noise, to be a pack of hounds running in the

vicinity of the supposed boar; when, on asking what it was of my friends, who seemed to treat the thing with consummate indifference, they replied,

"Oh, only a keeper with his hound hunting a hare."

"Well," I replied, "and enough too; if he continues amusing himself with that, for a single hound, wondrous din, we shall have all our English hounds —at least when you let them go—racing off to see what game is up."

"Oh, no," they replied, "they will not go."

But why they would not go I was left to imagine!

Luckily for us, the din ceased, and we were left to ourselves. At last we came to a green bough in a ride, plucked and thrown on the spot where the slot commenced, and we followed other of those marks till we came to a detached wood surrounded by fields, and severed from the forest by a wide road, and in this wood the boar was said to be safely in his lair. Having had time in passing to observe the slot, I said to one or other of my friends that I doubted if the animal who made that slot was so large as the old solitary we had killed; and, agreeing with me in this opinion, they said they thought the slot was that of an old sow. We all came to a halt in sight of the Land of Promise, and then there arose one of

those long and verbose consultations that in France, from their length and frequency, generally consume half a hunting-day. I could not help telegraphing to my friends my state of impatience, by every known sign; but they only laughed and kept on talking; when, in about an hour, the order was given to proceed. Having ascertained which way the wind blew, I took up a position under the hedge of the wood said to contain the boar, within shot of a low place and cross hedge leading from the wood to the forest, down which I deemed it likely the boar would break, and where it was said by my friends that they often did do so. Tying Coco to a tree behind me, as I faced this likely pass, I listened for the expected outburst of the hunting-cry. Of course it commenced among the old babblers the instant they were uncoupled; but in a short time I heard ahead of them the lighter, merrier cry of the English fox-hounds really at work; and I knew the game was up. "Volumed and vast," thanks to the insane roars of the French hounds, it swayed this way and that; and at last came thundering down the hill of the wood direct to me, and precisely in a line for the low place on which my attention was fixed. Coco, hearing the cry coming so close upon him, left off stamping his feet and munching at the green boughs,

and I knew by his ceasing from all noise that he too was interested. When the cry was within eighty yards of me, "Wow, wow, wow," went old Papajow, as if in view of the boar, forty yards ahead, and a hundred yards wide of, the other hounds, and between them and me, and coming down flinging his eagerly sounding tongue right along the little path in the wood that came out on the expected pass. A thought then perplexed me—I heard the cry of the pack turn slightly from old Papajow's line to their right, inclining more behind me, and for a second I scarce knew what to think. Had Papajow skirted to a view? or had he, as usual, flung his tongue without either scent or view, in a sort of tremulous anticipation or terror of the approximation of the boar? Intelligent Coco's sudden start, however, soon elucidated the matter, and, facing right about, I beheld the boar charging into the wide open field a hundred and fifty yards the other side of my horse and in rear of me, and kicking up the dirt behind him, as he thundered at the pace of a racehorse down into the little valley.

With a longing sigh for my rifle, I took the most deliberate aim with my shot-gun, and fired both barrels left and right, loaded with ball, as I conceived, just sufficiently in front of the lower portion of the

shoulder, or, in fact, in front of the elbow-joint and forearm—but I am positive without effect, as my ear never fails to catch the sound of a ball that tells. Away the boar, or rather, I believe, a very large old sow, flew right into the muzzles of the guns of a blouse and of M. d'Anchald's groom, who each missed her as she was slacking her speed to go into the other portion of the forest, at about the distance of fourteen yards from where they had posted themselves; and then that sagacious old rascal Papajow flew out of the expected pass, redoubling his tongue through the hanging smoke of my gun, in the hope that something had been killed, and two hundred yards wide of the English foxhounds, who broke from cover directly on the line of scent. Having found that nothing was killed, and that he had really no scent to hunt, this false old villain then changed for the sake of appearances in the open, and because he was violently rated by me and joined the others as they emerged from the wood, among whom my delighted friends of course then saw him, as the pack hunted the line of scent across the field into the further forest. In my haste to jump on Coco's back, I neglected to fasten my little pocket on the waist-belt, that held my ammunition; so in racing down the hill at speed all but one or two of my balls jolted out, and I cried to some one to lend

me more; these I got, and was soon side by side with the hounds again.

We had now got into a portion of the forest also on a hill, separated from the rest of the covers at one spot by a narrow stretch of young spring, the fields surrounding the wood elsewhere; and into this young spring Jules d'Anchald, in a quick and sportsmanlike way, hastened and arranged in a line a lot of blouses, so that it was impossible for the sow to break that way without bearing the fire of several guns. And here I would remark, for the benefit of all sportsmen, whatever be the animal they are in pursuit of, when they wish to occupy a pass between two woods for a shot, let them post themselves out of sight, within the verge of the wood to which the animal wishes to come, and not in the intervening space and in sight of the cover whence the animal is supposed to egress. In the latter case, as all wild animals take the precaution to look from a cover before they leave, they are sure to be detected, whereas in the former case, if the guns remain ambushed till the animal has fairly made his charge to cross the open, once landed in the space he will continue his way, even up to the muzzles of the guns, and after he has detected their position.

Having passed at a gallop along the line of blouses

formed by Jules, and ascertained that M. d'Anchald had posted himself, and that his groom and Maurice only were cheering on the hounds, I took on myself to guard one side of the cover where a field divided the woods, waiting for a shot or riding into the wood to assist the hounds, as occasion might require. Round and round this wood the old sow kept running, when, though several times she came close up to the verge of the copse, she would never show herself nor attempt to break. Of course I kept my ground, and, where I could see a long way on my side the wood, ascertained that others did the same by their's, leaving the far side of the cover to be similarly cared for by M. d'Anchald and the blouses.

It soon became quite evident to me that within the wood the tables were being turned, and that, instead of the old sow being hunted, she every now and then hunted the hounds, charging them whenever she met or could see them, and absolutely beating them off. I rode into cover, got off my horse, and crawled on my hands and knees beneath the bushes, making myself no higher than a hound, in the hope of deceiving her when she had not the wind, and inducing her approach — but in vain. Though I could hear her come at a jog-trot, for she did not choose to run any faster — and even see the copsewood shake above

her within twenty yards of me, I never could catch a glimpse for a snap-shot; so all the good I could achieve I did, and that was, when she had discovered me and turned away, I dashed into the cover after her with as great a crash as possible, view-hallooing, and doubling my horn, to cheer on the cowed and lagging hounds. At last, in horror, I knew that she had passed my position without any hounds on her line at all, and that the English fox-hounds were silent, and the old French babblers at all sorts of tricks to amuse themselves, escape contact with the savage game, and deceive their admiring masters.

The old French hounds — occasionally singly, at other times in pairs — came leisurely walking past me in full cry, when no animal larger than a mouse or a rabbit had ever passed; for of that I was more than once certain, by the maiden surface of the path, unimpressed by any slot whatever. Sometimes they would clamour by with an English hound staring at them in utter bewilderment; and at last all tongues became hushed, and some of the English hounds came up to me and sat down, as much as to say, "The boar is not in the cover, so you may as well take us home." Four or five English sportsmen could have overlooked the ground enough to have

rendered it impossible for even a fox to have broken away without being viewed; and yet nearly thirty Frenchmen contrived to let the huge sow trot out over the open space near where she had entered, and gain an immense start of us, before her absence was discovered, into the continuous forest — her departure alone being ascertained by a man's having accidentally crossed her slot, but no one knowing how long she had been gone. As I well knew, she had no hound on her line; still, long after she must have left the cover, the old French hounds continued a clamorous cry occasionally, and in all directions, as if they viewed her or thought she was after them — for either fact produces a similar result. I am told that hounds are more afraid of a wicked old sow than of a boar, and I believe it. The former runs more doggedly at them, and when she does get hold with her jaws, she gives the full weight of her body to the bite, and holds them compressed beneath her for some time.

The charge of the boar is made at a greater pace, not so much in pursuit of an enemy as to knock him out of the way and get rid of him. The tusk, if it hits, is the most deadly, but the bite of the sow more prolonged in its punishment, and her pursuit more continuous. The headlong charge of a boar

may be avoided, but it is difficult for a hound in thick cover to keep out of the way of a pertinacious and pugnacious old sow. In this instance all the hounds were beaten off, and if she had had a fancy for remaining where she was, we had no means to displace her. However, as soon as the slot was found, the hounds being drawn on it, they took up the running under the more satisfactory feeling that once again their foe was flying instead of running after them, and they were in their legitimate calling, that of pursuit. In this instance I had repeatedly to notice what I had observed before—French huntsmen never form the slightest or indifferently correct idea of the probable distance that the animal has obtained ahead. Amused and excited by the senseless clamour of the babbling hounds, they invariably fix their attention on the loudest noise, and stand in ecstacies in a ride till it comes up to them, and then go on to some other position, but seldom far enough ahead.

During this day, I know I am speaking well within the mark, when I assure my readers that poor Barricade's sister, Bavard, with others of the English hounds, close up with the old sow, were two miles in advance of the towling, hanging, uproarious old French hounds dwelling on the line; but my

horn telling the tale to the *piqueurs*, with the four single notes agreed on to telegraph the boar, was drowned by triumphant tunes, "exciting" *fanfares*, or operas, proclaiming that the noisy old tonguey toddlers in the rear were "running merrily together." Oh! how bitterly, I, for the moment, inveighed against horns being sounded in the rear instead of *at the head only of all chases*—and with a few weary dispirited hounds, what *mischief the noise behind did on this occasion!* I cheered at the head of the little real cry there was, and called for aid on all to come up and join; but, alas! there was more noise the other way, and nothing I could do would stop it.

Ahead, and miles ahead, of the rearmost row, in a turn the sow made, Jules d'Anchald viewed her come out to refresh herself and wallow in a brook, and got near enough to hear her rolling in the water, though he failed to get a shot. After this a blouse fired twice at her, and, as usual, swore he hit her; but still she went on, and, if they came up to her, beat off the only three English hounds that then continued the chase. I was in attendance on them to the last, and am sure she never *stopped to bay*. M. d'Anchald then again joined me with one or two tired hounds, but we could make nothing out; so having got our party and the few hounds

together, we left the sow in possession of her well-maintained wilderness, and set our heads for home.

Jules d'Anchald and others thought I had hit the sow when I shot at her; but I am quite sure I did not do so, for my ear, as I said before, would have told me if I had, and she never could have stood, had she been wounded, the chase we gave her. I doubt the story of the last blouse, who affirms he had broken one of her legs, or otherwise badly crippled her by his double shot, for had she been so stricken the three English hounds must have set her up at bay; and that I am positively certain they never did do, or, if they did so, they must have run away from her the instant she showed fight, without flinging even anything like a baying tongue. A more beautiful animal than this old sow I never saw, and, supposing it to be settled that, from the size of her slot, she was a sow, I am perfectly sure she was barren and without a litter. She was infinitely too thick and well let down in the body, and without the semblance that I could detect of a heavy teat to be the mother of a litter. Besides this, her method of running and fighting, and her defeat of the hounds in the first cover to which she attained, showed that she was of the female sex. In addition, throughout the day, not another boar of any sort, young or old,

was seen, though more than once we crossed a wolf, and Jules d'Anchald was very nearly getting a shot at one. On reaching the little village, an invitation came from the chief farmer for us to repair to his house for some refreshment; and as M. d'Anchald told me it was the thing to do, although it was late, and the delay would cause inconvenience to hound and horse, of course I acquiesced in all that seemed agreeable to my friends, and have it in my power to assure the agriculturists of England that, though we may have better hounds and a better system of hunting, we can no more surpass the farmer of fair France in hearty hospitality than we can outdo the French gentleman in gallantry and grace.

CHAP. XV.

"Rail on, ye vile and loathsome crew—
Swear that the sky's no longer blue,
That honey is not sweet:
That Nightingales are harsh as crows,
The Milch-cow roars, the Lion lows;
But dare not to entreat
One link to sever from that chain,
That makes your efforts worse than vain!"

Berkeley.

On the Thursday after our defeat by the sow, I amused myself by killing a few partridges, and by attending to and nursing the hounds; it being quite evident to me that between ill-health, want of condition, and over work, we had little or nothing left to hunt with; and that the tongues of all the hounds had come to be a good deal faster than their legs. Although this state of things will easily be understood by an English huntsman, there was not a *piqueur* in that part of France into whose head such a possibility entered. The prospect of further sport began now to fail; but we were aroused into another energetic attempt by the news that, in a portion of the forest with which, according to my friends, it was easy to

deal, there was a band of wild boars. The day of the week I forget, and, by some accident, cannot find the notes made at the time: however, on a lovely morning, mild enough for Midsummer's Day, with that sweet rarefied air sighing around us, that makes it a sin to light or even smell the fumes of a cigar, we wended our way through a little village, and by a brick-kiln, up to the verge of the woods. There a halt was called, and M. d'Anchald, myself, Jules, Ludovic, and his friend the Captain, as fine a specimen of a *Cuirassier* as ever I saw, went to post ourselves for a shot as best we could. The instant the hounds were uncoupled, away went the old French cripples, as usual, flinging their tongues; when, in the space of five minutes, I heard Bavard and the other English hounds working the drag of some animal; and shortly after, by the slot, I knew it to be a boar, and perhaps a band of them, Bavard hunting out the drag, and leading them beautifully.

And here let me notice another error into which the *piqueurs* whom I saw invariably fell. The old French hounds, from custom and their babbling propensities, the instant they are let go, put on the appearance of hunting, and, as I have elsewhere shown, begin giving tongue, the English hounds staring at them in mute bewilderment, because, there being no scent, they

have nothing to speak to, and, according to their worth and duty, they refrain from telling lies, and will not open. Frenchmen can't understand this, and consequently they think that their French hounds have much finer noses than the English ones; and the fact never strikes them that it is impossible that, on going promiscuously to spots in an immense forest, they *should always uncouple* their hounds directly on the scent of the animal they are looking for.

In this instance, the improving line of boars was soon picked out, and the foxhounds led the cry across a ride and into an outside quarter of the woods. On this we all made for that ride, and, hearing a right good cry of eager English tongues, I took a narrow path still further on, that led me nearer to where the work was getting, or seemed to be getting, fast and furious, and I distinctly heard it coming towards me. Having jumped off Coco, and secured him to a tree, something came at a crafty, listening trot from the contrary side of the path beyond which the hounds were running; and, turning round to see what it was, I beheld the old French dog Musto. I would have given worlds to have caught him, and coupled him up; but I had no couples, and he was much too wide awake to let me come within kicking or catching distance; for we had had a dispute or two to settle at

feeding time in the kennel, inasmuch as it was Musto's constant practice to get all-fours into the feeding trough, and, as he shovelled up what he thought the best bits throughout the full length of the trough, he grabbed by the nose any other hound that came in his way or attempted to feed till he had done. Musto and myself, therefore, had not fraternised, and as to catching him in cover, that was impossible; all that I could then do was to shake my fist at him, and to wish him at the devil. He crossed, to my infinite regret, at a stealthy foot's pace, and in the direction of the cry. On came that cry, merrily and well, the blithe and eager chirrup of a foxhound bitch or two, with Corbeau and other English dogs backing them, and old Windsor, from the royal kennels in England, joining them with his deep voice, though unable to run alongside from being down with a toe; some of the French hounds a mile behind, roaring and doubling their tongues at the brambles.

On it came, as direct for me as possible, and I could hear the boar's broad shoulders thrusting in advance! "Wow, wow, wow!" suddenly went that infernal old Musto, who had been lying in wait for the opportunity between me and the approaching boar, and I heard the *sanglier* dash off to my right, and then caught a glimpse of him springing the narrow ride,

about 150 yards from me, with old Musto hallooing and roaring at his hocks, as if he had legitimately got there. On came the pack, about 100 yards behind Musto, and M. d'Anchald viewed the boar, and, as he thought, his fast old favourite leading brilliantly and honestly half a mile ahead of the whole pack. The wind was right, everything was right, for my killing this boar; but Musto spoilt it, as these false old French skirters and babblers are for ever doing, but which it is totally impossible to induce my friends to believe.

Well! away we went, the hounds dividing on two of the boars, but, the lines crossing, they got together again, when, from none of us getting a shot, and these boars being either one year old, or a *bête de compagnie;* two years, or what the French term a *ragot;* or even up to a *quartanier,* or four-year boar, not old enough to be impeded by their weight, they ran us to a standstill without the chance of a shot. A terribly long, hard day we had, the hope of a shot leading me on, trusting to be able by a bullet to reduce a boar to a level with the hounds, and thus to obtain a victory. "Hope," in this instance, did indeed "tell a flattering tale;" so, calling on our horns to each other, after the fashion of a broken covey of partridges, to collect ourselves, and to bring up the

jaded and loitering hounds, who were scattered worse than we were, we wended our way through the dusky woods, and were not sorry to share the blessings of the hospitable château.

In a day or two, the hounds were again said to be fit for the chase; and, with M. de Cheveaux added to our party, it was resolved to repair to a distant part of the forest where roe-deer were in plenty, so to ensure some venison. The spot appointed for our meeting was in a splendid vista or road through the woods, and when Maurice d'Anchald commenced his draw, we all took up positions for a shot as the wind or our fancies dictated. The cry commenced, as usual, among the old babblers, but was soon after joined by the English hounds, and very quickly the little pack was divided into three parts. After changing my place according to the intelligence afforded by my ear, I selected again to make a stand in a large wide vista, where the copse had been cut, and where there was a fire, and some men burning charcoal. The fire and smoke were large, and the two men attending it in constant motion, so I went to some distance along the ride, thinking that the charcoal-burners and their appurtenances would scare the deer towards the quiet part where I had resolved to hide.

After a long delay, the cry of a couple or so of hounds, varying in direction, sometimes coming nearer, sometimes dying away, reached my ear; I then heard them coming right upon the charcoal-furnace, and settled in my mind that that object would very likely head the deer to me. My vexation may easily be conceived when I saw the roe deer cross the vista in the wood right through the smoke of the fire, and, within twenty yards of both the men, three hounds only on very good terms. I then ascertained that these three hounds were running towards what seemed to be a heavier cry; so, making all the haste I could, I turned into another ride, and at some distance saw that it was occupied by my friends. On reaching Jules d'Anchald, I found that the Captain had missed a fair shot at a deer, and that Maurice had fired one or two long ones without effect; and soon, as we listened, the cry of the hounds began to fail, and the deer seemed to have baffled them. Jules and I were talking, when all at once, close to us in the cover, old Musto flung his tongue in his usual eager manner, when I thought that a good opportunity to illustrate his falsehood.

"There, Jules!" I exclaimed; "listen to that old babbler; he is never a hundred yards from one gun

or the other, and always close upon a ride. There he is, full cry under our feet, not another hound near to back him, and you see the effect of being so false; none of them will come to his tongue, right or wrong, and we don't think it worth while to go in." "Wow, wow, wow," went the old dog again, when, as we looked idly on—or rather, when Jules did so—up jumped a roe deer, who had been headed by Jules in the ride, and which had couched on the spot to which old Musto had skirted by accident, and put him up; but Jules, though he caught a glimpse of the deer, did not fire. "Oh dear!" I cried to myself, "there is an accident which will go far to upset the lessons I have been giving as to the mischief done by these old skirters. My friends now will think them always right." And I read the confirmation of my fears in Jules d'Anchald's triumphant countenance. The hounds then ran this and other roe deer for a long time, and as soon as they had again run, or rather walked, themselves to a standstill, we sounded the horn to collect them, and went home.

One morning subsequent to this, while we were resting after our fatigues, Jules d'Anchald burst into my room with the joyful news that intelligence of a band of boars had reached him from a near and easily accessible portion of the forest; so "Up, up!"

he cried, "and we'll attack them with such hounds as are fit to go." I was not long in complying with this request, when Jules, Maurice, Ludovic, the Captain, and myself set off on a beautiful morning. M. d'Anchald did not go with us. Arrived at the cottage of a poacher, we then learnt that the boars that had that morning been reported were those that we had already disturbed days ago, when old Musto, as previously described, prevented my getting a shot. Crestfallen enough we were at finding ourselves out on a fool's errand; but, after due consultation, we resolved to cross the river to the other side of the forest, and to draw that portion of the woods where we had previously met with the boars.

It was agreed to commence at the outside quarter of the forest; so the spare guns went in, to line the intersecting ride. The ride itself was damp enough between the ruts to slot any animal that had traversed it; and, as is my constant custom on such occasions, I closely examined the ride as I came up, and ascertained that nothing heavier than a mouse had been upon it. My post was the outside one of the whole line; so, tying Coco still further ahead of where I was, to act as a sort of "stop," I selected a spot whence I could see on either hand, and listened for the babbling commencement. As usual, the

moment Maurice commenced his draw, all the old French hounds were in full cry; but of this I took no notice, till I heard Bavard fling her tongue in an opposite direction, and run slanting back to where the hounds had been put into cover. I knew then that an animal of some sort was on foot, and prepared for a shot at anything larger than a rat. It was considerably upwards of an hour, perhaps two hours, before anything came decidedly in my direction. Bavard's tongue had ceased, and not a single English hound spoke; but every now and then there came such a volumed roar from the French hounds, that, had I not been used to it, I should have deemed them running some large beast of chase in view.

At last this dawdling, lagging riot came towards me, with immense noise, but no speed; and so near that I could distinguish the howls of an old weak black-and-white French bitch, who always seemed to me to do nothing else but sing or howl by way of accompaniment to the others. "Well, it's funny to call this hunting!" I thought; "but here they come right at my boots, so at least I shall detect them in some strange vagary." Up came the pack, at a jog trot, the little babbling harrier leading, in no way going through the farce of pretending to pick out a scent, but trotting on in the most open places in full

cry with her head up, every French hound there doing his utmost to increase the din, and Bavard and the other English hounds walking on either side of them in mystified astonishment, while old Windsor twice went through a canine attitude of contempt, as if he thought three legs were quite enough on which to make his observation. I stood stock still, and, being down wind of the babbling culprits, they deemed they were safely, and with impunity, amusing their masters; but, as soon as the little harrier's nose came within a foot of my boots, I let them know that there was an English looker-on who was fully down on their pretended chase, and, with considerable complacency on their parts, my scornful rate brought them all short up. They saw at once that I did not like it; not one attempted to pass me right or left; some scratched; the old howling bitch sat down, and all would have been too happy to have done no more — when I heard a struggling, growling, whining, loud, odd tongue coming along the exact line of the babblers I had stopped, and in a short time the poor old thing that had been ripped to pieces by a boar, and who was only thoroughly whole or alive in his fore parts, as before described, came in sight, struggling with the opposing underwood, and growling at it. All the hounds turned their heads, in the coolest way I ever

saw, to look at this animal; and I was curious to see what he would do, so I said nothing. When he came up, it took him a moment or two to understand what he saw; but after standing still for two or three minutes to catch his wind, he shuffled through the quiescent hounds, got into the ride which I had ridden up, and carefully slotted, even to see the track of a mouse, and, to my infinite amusement, went through the ceremony of making a hit, and went bawling and roaring along on the heel of my horse. All the other French hounds joined him, roaring as if they viewed a boar, while the English ones kept aloof; so, to see what Jules would make of it when it got down to him, I followed, without troubling myself to get on Coco. The hounds kept along the ride till Jules met them, and I cried out: —

"Oh, kick 'em over! they are running the heel-way of my horse."

"No," he replied, "it is a fox."

"No," I said, "it is no such thing; they brought their pretended line under my boots where I had been for two hours, and I know they are running nothing — at least, nothing but the heel of my horse."

"D——n my eyes!" exclaims my friend, much excited, "I saw the fox."

"Where?"

"At the end of the cover where we began."

"All right, so far," I cried. "I heard Bavard find and speak to him two hours ago; but the insane cry of the babblers called her away. They are on nothing now."

"Oh! you will see they are all right, and we shall kill something."

"Well," I said, "my dear fellow, you may go on if you like; but, as I know they are only amusing themselves and deceiving you, for old Coco's sake I shall go home. Look!" I cried, as a last resource, "not an English hound backs them."

"Oh, that does not matter, they have no noses."

This shut me up, and we separated; and I rode home in deep cogitation on the utter hopelessness of setting my young friends right, or of curing them of their most erroneous and essentially French ideas on the noble chase. I need not assure my readers that they came home unattended with the success they are always looking for and so seldom obtain.

CHAP. XVI.

"Sweet fairies, why are ye so kind,
You come with every breath of wind
To meet me in the wood ?"
"Oh mortal brave, dost thou not know—
With every sigh we come and go
O'er forest, field and flood :
We have indeed enough to do
To fly between your love and you !"

Berkeley.

HAVING lately mislaid the memorandums I made at the time as to my daily sport in the French forests, it has caused me to misplace the run I am about to narrate, which ought to have come between the two described in the last chapter. The old sow having been supposed to have been wounded by the blouse at the end of the day, from our having no hounds fit to go, M. d'Anchald sent over to M. E. Brunier to ask him to meet and draw for the creature thus supposed to have been left in misery. A fixture was accordingly made, and we repaired to a little village in the centre of those woodlands. It was a long distance to come to cover; so, as we reached the little inn some time before the arrival of the hounds,

there being no stable fit to put a donkey in, we fed our horses in the best way we could in the little space in front of the village inn. For Coco I turned a barrel upside down, and fed him with some oats on the bottom of it, while others invested their provender in wheelbarrows, or buckets, or anything that would enable a horse to pick up the corn.

Many of the oats being spilt, I asked two or three middling-looking girls belonging to the inn, but not nearly so smart and pretty as the English barmaid: "Où sont les canards, et où sont les oiseaux pour le rôti, et que nous bouillons avec des langues?" and having said this, in a female key I began to call the ducks and chickens in the English fashion, who, either by accident or instinct, instantly appeared round corners at my call, amidst a scream of French laughter, and pitched most greedily into what seemed to be a very well-relished as well as unusual meal. "The chickens and the ducks," I exclaimed, "they fraternise with me. Ah ha, vous êtes une jolie fille," I said to the most tittering girl, at the same time chucking her under the chin, which produced fresh merriment, and sent her into the house to hide her confusion. I then strolled into and inspected the little church close by, of course taking my hat off at the porch, with deep consideration, as the peasants

looked on; and shortly after, M. E. Brunier arrived, but not yet his two men with their *limier*. They came at last, and, on arriving, proclaimed that there was neither boar nor wolf, nor anything else in that part of the forest where we were supposed to have left a wounded sow. Supposing she had been there, if hurt to the extent affirmed by the blouse, she would either have been laid up in the midst of the thick cover, or been devoured by the wolves, who had, since we were there, been seen in that vicinity. The men then made into the public-house for a good hearty meal; and when that was concluded, a long consultation was held as to what it was best to do.

I was for trying the woods where the *piqueurs* and *limier* had been; but, as my French friends still declared their method infallible, in spite of the examples already made in my presence, it was ultimately resolved to draw in another direction, where they deemed it more likely to find either boar, wolf, or roe deer. Having again gained some news of wolves, a halt was made, the chief *piqueur* tied up his horse and his bunch of hounds, and sat down, I take it, as usual, to smoke his pipe; while M. E. Brunier, selecting a couple of old hounds, supposed to be steady and to be relied on, commenced drawing, or attempting to draw, an interminable forest of the

thickest lying. Of course we had not been long thus uselessly wiling away a lovely day, when one of these faithful hounds began practising on the credulity of Frenchmen, by flinging the tongue. I kept ahead, and down the wind to rides and places where I could see, but nothing stirred. Jules and I at last met, and I said,—

"Hark at that old noisy beggar, hunting a mouse, or else the heels of the horse of the huntsman; it's nothing else."

"Oh, no," he replied; "no doubt the wolves have been there."

"Been there!" I cried; "I don't doubt it, some time or other in their lives; but that old false devil is not speaking to them. I tell you, Jules, for the hundredth time, these French hounds hunt you or their masters. I have seen yours hunt you full cry, when there was nothing else, and no other excuse for noise, and the hound we hear is occasionally doing the same."

Presently after this, along another ride, up came M. E. Brunier, and sat with us.

"Ask him, Jules," I said, "what that hound is hunting?" The reply to this was a dubious shake of the head from the hound's owner.

"Wow, wow," the cry continued towards the

portion of the cover whence M. E. Brunier came to join us, when, soon after, to my intense amusement, "Wow, wow, wow," we heard it coming at a better pace up the ride between the two young springs where M. Brunier had ridden; and before us all, and, worst of all, before me, and in a situation *admitting of no possibility of doubt*, "Wow, wow, wow," and a prolonged roar at the end of it, up came the false old babbler right to the heels of her master's horse, when she smiled up at him, and then sat quietly down to rest herself on the grass.

"I say, Jules," I said, "what do you call that? Half the time you are out you don't know it, but your hounds are hunting you; so, according to facts, and as far as your ear at least goes, you need no veritable animal of chase!"

"Oh, no," Jules replied, evidently put to it for an answer, "sometimes!"

"Yes, my boy, sometimes and for ever; but it's no use my telling you so."

M. Brunier having now affirmed that by getting himself hunted he had made it sure that in thousands of acres of the finest lying in the world he had left no other creatures in their lairs, sounded his sonorous horn to call up his huntsman and the coupled-up pack. He sounded and sounded again,

fanfares excitingly appellant; but either the short black pipe was somniferous, or the *piqueur* would not hear, for we waited at least the best part of an hour for his appearance, although we could not have left him above half a mile. I laughingly suggested his having been surprised by wolves and eaten up while he was smoking and his hounds strung to a tree, or that other things might have happened, pertaining to love as well as venery—being enabled to tease my friend Jules, without reaching the ear of M. Brunier, who seemed much annoyed at the loss of time. At last, however, the *piqueur* and his hounds came up, and it was resolved to trot on to a still more distant portion of the wood. Why we were to run away from all the splendid cover around, I never could by any possibility divine. Passing by a prettily-situated little farm in the very midst of the forest, some people again reported "The wolves!" but no notice was taken, none of the fine lying drawn, and still we jogged on. At last the two *piqueurs* coolly pulled up in a little rivulet that crossed the lane, and one of them, producing a pocket-cup from his brandy-flask, gave it to the other, who, dismounting, began to refresh himself out of it first, and then to hand it up to his friend, who still occupied the saddle.

"Smoking's dry work," I said to Jules. "It's my opinion those fellows don't wish to hunt to-day; it will be dark soon."

"Oh yes," he said, "we draw here."

Having thus refreshed themselves, the hounds were at last uncoupled, and went off to draw much more silently and steadily than usual. They had not been long in cover when one hound gave tongue, holding on a line of scent, but singly and without being joined by the others. We all rode up a narrow ride to meet this hound, with the evident desire on M. Brunier's part to see what hound it was; and the single hound, apparently rather coldly in my English opinion, hunted the line of some animal right under our horses' noses, and the horns immediately began a fanfare, telling the surrounding trees that "the animal was on foot." I saw two or three other hounds coming up to join the one flinging his tongue, and soon after they got together; and, as all French hounds always seem to do, however slow they may be going, to the ear they put on an appearance of running hard. We separated, as, a shot being desirable, I always like to be alone, when, in one of the turns of the run, the hounds went from me; so, seeing what seemed to be a little pathway leading in the right direction, I followed it: it gradually got

less and less, and at last ended in the wildest and most pathless portion of the immense wood. One thing there alone pleased me: I came on the usings of a litter of boars. There were the paths made by the marcassins, and where they had basked in the sun or had their games at play. Finding that I could not make my way out of the wood, I gave Coco his head, when he gaily followed what seemed to be a weak place in the bushes, but soon after came to a halt, and as much as told me he knew no more of the matter than I did.

Nothing remained to me then but a reflection as to the wind and position of the sun when I came into that thick portion of the woods; and, drawing thus an observation from things above me, I set Coco's head towards the ride in the cover whence I had come, and, after a vast deal of thrusting and rough work, gained it, and then had to race in order to make up for lost time. Faintly now and then the cry of hounds and the horn reached me, and I kept approaching these sounds, save when they were excluded by some intervening hill. At one of these moments I came on a peasant at work in a field, and cried out, "Where are the hounds?" He pointed in their direction; when, seeing I galloped by the indication of his hand, he cried out, "No, not that way for

you; you can't get out; return to the gate." Understanding why he thought I could not go towards the hounds, I timed dear Coco in his stroke at the cover fence, and he flew over like a bird, not touching the blackberry bushes which twined above the little wattled hedge. Though the jump was into a cover, it had at last become a settled matter between my horse and myself as to who was invariably to dictate. The hounds had kept on, and it was some little time before I recovered the place I wished for, and then, when I did so, as far as I could judge from their method, they did not seem to be on good terms with the beast of chase, whatever it might be, though then they must have been at him for more than an hour. Hearing that the cry was pointing for a high road intersecting the forest, I made for what seemed to me to be the likeliest pass near me. Shortly after this the report of a gun sounded, but, as I was not sure of much beyond it, I kept my position. The cry from those who fired ought to have been, in French as well as in English, "Look back."

The fact was as follows: "M. d'Anchald and Ludovic had made for the intersecting high road as well as myself, and, knowing a likely pass, posted themselves. Ludovic got a shot, hit the animal of

chase, and headed him back." He then got the hounds together, who were not at all on good terms with their scent, and the instant he did so, and cheered them on again, the cry freshened into a roar. As I have said before, four couples of French hounds will make nearly as much cry as twenty couples of English ones; and for this reason—they have not only heavier tongues, but they have a way of their own of doubling them in a sort of continuous outcry; hence, as they never go fast enough to interfere with their powers of speech, it is easy enough to account for the noise they make.

The cry then turned directly to me, and it was evident that the shot I had heard at the boar, (for I knew by the air on the horns that was the species of animal we were after,) had put the hounds on the very best terms, and they were turning very short, and, as I thought, at times in view. On two or three occasions they came up to the verge of the woods near me, but as often the boar refused to show himself; so, feeling sure he did not mean to break, I entered the wood and closed in with the hounds. I then ascertained that the hounds were really running hard, for their cry was eager, and they were all together; but it seemed to me that, though running hard, or clamorous around

their game, still they went very slow, which accounted for their packing so well, turned very short, but never came to bay. Several times they were close enough for me to detect the thrusting shoulders and heavy tread of a large animal had he been there; but there was no such indication, and the hounds again and again turned from me, without my catching a view or being able to guess the size of the boar they were after. Whatever it was, it seemed to go as light as a fox, or certainly the noise it made was drowned by the feet as well as the tongues of the hounds; they were close at it, yet it never turned to bay.

Several times M. d'Anchald and the two *piqueurs* crossed me in the rides, but the hounds were too near us, and we were all too much occupied for conversation. The pack then turned from me again, and ran some little time rather wide of me, when once or twice I thought I heard the scream of a wild boar, but so faint was the sound that I could not be sure. At last the report of a gun reached me, and all noise ceased, so I made in as near as the ride would let me, to where I could still hear an occasional bay, and found that we had run in to a little boar marcassin, or one of a litter; and from the fact having taken place in the vicinity of Jules d'Anchald,

he had rushed up and caught the little boar in time to save his life, though wounded with the shot from Ludovic's cartridge, and much bitten by the hounds. Having caught the marcassin, he fired off his gun as a signal to bring us all together, the French not having, that I could ever hear, any holloa like the English "who-whoop" to proclaim the death of the hunted animal. When I saw this pretty little, but beautifully savage-looking marcassin, who could not have been more than five months old, supposing him to have been born in May, and heard from Jules, who saw it, that he kept up to the last the best running fight possible against his eight or nine assailants, I was indeed astonished! He was not higher than a fox, and in beautiful condition for running, his coat so healthful and his frame full of young and growing vigour. They had tied up his mouth with a whipthong, and his hind and fore feet also together, so that he lay on the ground panting in terrible distress, but with an eye of the wildest fury. I knelt down by the little warrior, when, as he saw my hand approach his face, his eyes flashed fire; but on feeling that, instead of hurting him, I smoothed the bristles on his cheek and forehead, the poor little eye changed in its expression, and seemed almost to indicate thankfulness.

"Save his life, won't you?" I cried; "he deserves

it after this run of nearly two hours; and, by Jove, if he recovers, you may obtain from him a national blessing in your locality, and improve the breed of your tame pigs. Ah, ha, my boys, think of that!"

"Oh, yes, we will save him," was the jolly rejoinder. "Come, carry him to the village."

"Is there no water near," I asked, reflecting how necessary I had found an immediate immersion in it to a beaten stag or hind, and well knowing the same remedy was as applicable to a boar.

"No, there is no water till we come to the village; then there is plenty."

"Oh, do not carry him slung in that way between you on a pole, with his natural position reversed," I said; "lift him across your neck, and resting on your shoulders while you hold his little hands, he will be able to breathe."

But no; "things were never carried in that way;" a pole was therefore run between his hinder and fore legs, and thus — his "back to earth, his face to heaven"—the little animal was borne in careless triumph to the village, which was at least a mile and a half off, all the horns playing the most exciting of all fanfares, the "Death of the Wild Boar." When we reached the water, of course the gallant little marcassin was dead.

Having gained the village, then followed the untidy disembowelling, skinning, and cutting up, all performed on a table, while the animal was reeking hot; and while this was doing we mulled some wine, which, with the aid of a little brandy and sugar, made the ordinary liquid palatable even to an English stomach. Of course I found myself an object of curiosity to the villagers; and whenever I emerged from the hostelrie with some bread in my hand for my steed, I was attended to the spot where I had tied him by all the children, who seemed also much taken up with my dear old Coco's neigh, when I called him by his name.

Now, my brother huntsmen in England will gather two things from the chase thus recounted. The first is the extraordinary slackness and slowness of the French hounds; and the second is the vast difference that exists between a wild boar in his native forests and a pig in a farmyard. This creature, at the age of about five months, had not only given us a very good gallop of nearly two hours' duration; but he had gone over as he went many miles of ground; and my conviction is that, had he not been viewed, shot at, and wounded by Ludovic, he would have beaten us by stoutness and speed. However, hounds and boar, matched as they were,

afforded us really a fine day's sport; and to M. E. Brunier I am much indebted for the amusement his establishment afforded me, as well as for the invariable good nature and desire to entertain me which he manifested on every occasion.

It was dark long before we regained our home; and the painful hour, alas! approached, when I was to bid adieu to the hospitable château, and to those friends that had received me not merely as an acquaintance, but as sincerely, as affectionately, and as well as if I had known them all my life, or even been their relative by the ties of consanguinity.

CHAP. XVII.

" Time hung not heavy; I could think
On one sweet form my land contained,
And gaze, as from a river's brink,
Which flowing on its course maintained
The beaming lily—white as snow,
Or pearly treasures deep below,
And feel that distance, time, nor tide,
Could keep the loved one from my side!"

Berkeley.

"No man can tether time nor tide;" and with this line from the dear poet "Burns," I commence approaching the penultimate chapter of my Month in the Forests of France. The hounds at the château were by this time (we were getting far advanced in the month of October) almost *hors de combat*—barley-bread, mange, and too much work were fast telling on the few that had limbs and truth enough in their composition to be useful, and I saw that, however agreeable the society of my kind friends might be, still, so far as the wolf and wild boar went, there was no more to be got from them. And here let me allude to a question asked with great *naïveté* the other day, in Paris, by that clever journal "Le Sport," as to

"What could be the great difference in the condition of hounds, in their being fed with barley-bread or oatmeal?" This is precisely the sort of question I expected. Frenchmen know nothing whatever of the nature of the hound, nor what tends to keep him in that healthful condition, without which he cannot be triumphant in speed and endurance over the wolf and boar. For some reason ordained by nature, barley-meal is heating and injurious to the stomach and constitution of the hound. The fact is so, and man cannot controvert it. On the other hand, oatmeal—old, and well boiled—is precisely adapted to keep him in vigour and condition; and its mild, yet nourishing and glutinous nature, while it sustains him, occasions no feverish heat whatever. Barley-bread may appear at first outlay to be the cheapest, but in the end it is not so, and for the two following reasons. If the hound is fed on barley-bread, his huntsman does not get from him his most effective services, nor the worth of the animal he uses; and in the second place, when subsisting on barley-bread, to keep the skin of the hound free from cutaneous eruption and mange, and render him decent to look at, a huntsman has to spend a comparative little fortune in train-oil, brimstone, turpentine, mercurial soap, and other remedies.

To proceed, however, with my narrative. The hour at last arrived when I was to bid adieu to my hospitable French reception, and M. d'Anchald insisted on sending me to Nevers, more than twenty miles, in his carriage, behind the two splendid white mares. We started on a Wednesday morning, in good time for me to dine and sleep at the Hôtel de France, at Nevers, that night, and take the rail to Paris on the following morning, transact some business I had to do in Paris that evening and the following morning, and then start by rail again for the packet to England from Havre on the Friday night. Such, at least, were my intentions; how uncomfortably they were thwarted remains to be seen. On leaving the château my two little white terriers, Nipper and Tacks, and myself amused ourselves with looking from the windows at the country; and in getting out of the carriage to walk up the hills, one of the white mares, I regret to say, fell down and broke her knees. We reached Nevers in excellent time; and I made a good dinner, waited on by a very attentive garçon, who after dinner produced the Crimean medal assigned to the French soldiers by our gracious Queen, which perhaps accounted in some measure for the pains he took to make me comfortable. I had great fun in making

my wishes known as to my dinner and bed, for there was not a soul around me who understood English; and as to the plump chamber-maid, she nearly died of laughing.

Having been called, I think at seven o'clock in the morning, and made a good breakfast, myself and my terriers got into the omnibus, and in our way the vehicle stopped at the door of a convent or habitation in Nevers of the Sœurs de Charité. The door into their house being open, I saw a young priest in the passage, in his clerical dress and shaven crown, kiss the sisters all round; and in one or two instances, the ancient enemy of mankind within me, ever anxious for good that leads, I suppose, to evil, prompted me to descend and civilly relieve him of his agreeable occupation; but, just as the battle within me was at the full, all jealousy ceased when I beheld him, having finished off the women, proceed to a similar operation with some men. "Oh! thou false fiend," I said to the throes of Sathanas within me, "get thee gone; there was nothing in the kisses the young man gave to the women; I saw them only through the deceptive eye of the devil. Hang me, if he seems not to have as much zest when he's smacking at the men." He entered the omnibus, and I fell into a reverie as to why or how a kiss

could be turned into a soulless, or simple, cool good-bye. Everything, then, is custom; yet still, I said to myself, all the custom in the world has not sufficed to make me on such subjects as cool as this young priest. He only touched the cheeks certainly; what if by accident he had stumbled, and, swerving from the cheek, had touched the lip!

"Be quiet, sir," I said reprovingly to myself, "you, as a worldly self-seeker, can't comprehend the well-regulated discipline of the clerical mind. Tinder and a wet blanket catch not the fire alike; so continue your journey without evil thoughts, and talk to the holy man."

This was totally beyond me; so I fell into a sweet dream of English kisses, and thought of stars and moonlight nights, a shining river, and a glittering ocean, forests, woods, and wilds, shoes that creaked beneath the feet of *de trops*, and doors that creaked or that did not creak — in short, all the passages or tales of love that I had known or heard of in the passing world. All at once I was aroused into more active deeds by an abrupt stop, which pitched me one way and the priest another (our line, even in the confines of an omnibus, was in this instance luckily wide of each other), accompanied by the rattled out r's and stifled execrations of the coachman.

The fact was, one of the horses had a habit of stopping so short, that he required a poll-chain the size of the cable in the bows of a seventy-four gun ship to keep him forward, and to prevent his shooting backwards under the omnibus whenever the coachman gave him the least intimation that he had arrived at his journey's end. We descended, and were soon on the branch rail, on our way to the main line. Arrived there, we had to wait for the express train, and before it arrived a slow train started for some place on the route, and after it had got about a hundred yards, a French woman, who had left her infant in one of the compartments while she went in to eat and drink, appeared, and commenced a pursuit of the train as hard as she could lay legs to the ground, shouting to it all the while to "stop and take her up." At first people pitied her and laughed too; but when she continued her course up the rails a sudden thought occurred to the station-master of her meeting or being overtaken by another train, so two nimble porters were despatched to overtake and bring her back, which they succeeded in doing.

My train at length arrived, when the priest and myself were joined in it by a French gentleman, who very kindly and civilly introduced himself to me,

spoke English very well, and ultimately gave me his card. I regret very much that I have lost his address, but nevertheless I by no means intend to drop his acquaintance. And here it is right for me, as a faithful historian, to endeavour to relieve French gentlemen of an egregious error into which they seem generally to have fallen, and to rescue my countrymen and their manners from a blame which does not really attach, at least, to those in good society. It seems a settled belief in the mind of France, that every Englishman swears, or lards his discourse with blasphemous expressions. This erroneous and extremely vulgar supposition has got us in France, wherever we go, the soubriquet of "Monsieur Goddam."

To such an extent does this foolish belief extend, that if you meet Frenchmen in the best society, and they wish to prove to you how thoroughly conversant they are with the English language, *à-propos* to nothing they are sure to bring out some terrible oath. For instance, at dinner, suddenly your neighbour will say to you, pointing to a dish, "Damn my eyes, shall you have some of dis?" or, in travelling in the railway carriage, your French companion will remark, "Damn my eyes, look what pretty gardens!" Now, these oaths annoy me personally and nationally when applied collectively as

the custom of my countrymen. None but English kings and princes, that I am aware of, ever swore in the society of ladies, when, as the sovereign is supposed to be "incapable of doing wrong," such an insane latitude assigned to a human being, albeit anointed, might perhaps excuse, if not the sin, at least a portion of the error. English gentlemen in the best society don't swear. Of course, when excited, and not governed by that sweet and beautiful soda which for ever corrects the rough acid of male humanity—the presence of woman—we all at times rap out an oath.

Masters of hounds would burst if they had not that safety-valve; but to swear in society, and *à-propos* to nothing of an angry or unpleasantly exciting nature, is vulgarity itself, as well as a breach of decency; and a finished gentleman would rather die than do it. To me, in all cool moments, an oath is disgusting, and the taking of "the name in vain" profane. Instead of the Englishman being thus saddled with the name of "Monsieur Goddam," the appellation is a million times more applicable to Frenchmen. They swear in French, and take the Lord's name in vain, in almost every sentence. "Dieu!" or "Mon Dieu!" on the most trivial subjects is perpetually on their lips; and as to the "sacrés!" and the rattled out

"r-r-r's" with which the lower classes garnish a variety of execrations when they are in a rage—in that they would overwhelm to nothing the English Billingsgate vocabulary. I pray of all my friends in France, who may read this, to reflect on what I say, and to leave off not only French oaths, but those that they have inadvertently picked up in English: they are not characteristic of the English gentleman's conversation, and they are vulgar and disgustingly obscene.

Well, we rattled on pleasantly enough throughout the journey, and in good time arrived in Paris. Every body was civil; and, when I had collected my luggage, one little hamper alone was missing. Having announced the fact to the assembled porters, one requested me to follow him, and conducted me to the long table, behind which the officials were standing, with my litle hamper before them, in serious cogitation. I had paid for luggage over weight, and for every imaginable thing; so why was my little hamper thus an object of suspicion?

"What is in this hamper?" asked the civil functionary, in his native tongue.

"Nothing!" I replied, in my funny French.

"Oh yes, Monsieur," he said, "there is something" (lifting it up and trying its weight).

"Yes," I replied, laughing; "of course it is not empty; but there is nothing you need look at."

"Yes," he said, applying his nose to the wicker work, while he continued to smile: "there is meat."

"No!" I persisted; "not a bit — there are bones."

"Bones! oh no! what use are bones."

"Bones, and nothing but bones," I rejoined, undoing the lid, and exposing the ghastly skulls of wild boars — "bones, as I told you (we were all laughing). And now," I continued, "since you have given me the trouble of showing them to you, perhaps you'll confess there's nothing left to pick."

"Oh no, Monsieur, not anything" — civilly laughing, and aiding me to refill the basket: a porter behind me whistling the "Death of the Wild Boar," to let me know he was a sportsman.

Soon after this I reached my comfortable quarters, which I beg to recommend to all my friends, the Hôtel Biron, in the Rue Lafitte. I had been out, and was returning to my hotel, when I passed the Café de Paris. Through the superb glass windows I saw dinner going on, well-dressed garçons in attendance, the rooms beautifully lit up, and round the corner came, from the regions below, an exquisite smell of the best French cookery. How can I do better, I said to myself, than dine here? No sooner said than

done. I ascended the steps, walked into the dining-rooms, selected a comfortable table, sat down, and ordered for my curious inspection the bill of fare. Being pressed for time, I could not wait to order the most *récherché* dishes, nor to commence with oysters, a thing when out on a feasting excursion I am sometimes apt to do; so I repeated to the most attentive and well-appointed garçon, the following orders: going over them more than once that there might be no mistake. Soupe à la reine, which proved not so good as that I used to get from Ude; filet de tourbot à la crême, côtelettes de mouton à la Soubise, some very good ice, I forget the name of it, a splendid peach, biscuits, some coffee and curaçoa.

When I came into dinner, at a casual glance I found there were two or three gentlemen dining *téte-à-tête* with their ladies; and among them more than one Englishman of my acquaintance — one, a nice, white-headed old fellow, who had not long left off a pig-tail, a pattern as to discretion and virtue; and bless my soul! what a difference change of air and scenery and Parisian attire had made in their ladies — they all looked so much younger and more pretty than they did in England, and even the colour of their hair had changed; so, I said to myself, "Well! if a man wanted his wife to improve in looks,

to see her to advantage, he should bring her certainly to Paris. But what again seemed equally odd was that, though the backs of my male friends were towards me, the faces of their ladies looked at me, and not one seemed to recognise my expectant glances.

"Well," I said, "they've cut me, so I will think only of my dinner."

Could I have been mistaken in the identity of the more distant gentleman,—perhaps I might! "Garçon," I said, calling the waiter to me, "is that an English gentleman or a French gentleman there?" I said in an under tone, nodding my head to a man's back I thought myself very well acquainted with.

"Oh!" said the garçon, "he dines here frequently —no Englishman, he is French, I know him very well."

"Well then," I muttered, "all I can say is, I could have sworn that he had been so-and-so"—No, reader! you don't catch me letting out who he was: I took the hint from the discreet garçon, who must have known the contrary to what he told me. Well, I went on with my dinner, speculating on this man's back, and every now and then looking full at his pretty companion; when suddenly he caught my face in the looking-glass on the wall opposite to which

he was seated, and rising at once, with an exclamation of surprise, he came to me, and two old friends shook hands. "Oh, I see," said I to myself, "I won't trouble my other friends; it is so pretty to see such connubial felicity. I never saw anything like it in England in these gentlemen. France has worked a reformation!"

My dinner being over, I repaired to my hotel; the head waiter, an excellent servant, showing me his Crimean medal, and being sedulously attentive to all my wishes. The next morning, the Friday morning, in the evening of which the packet sailed from Havre, I got up early to transact some business. Having finished what I had to do, on arriving at the Hôtel Biron I found, from my not being aware of the local distances of the places where I had to go from each other, that if I intended to take the only train that remained by which to catch the packet, time was not left me in which to get my passport. At this moment the gentleman who had introduced himself so kindly in the train came to call on me, and on my stating the dilemma in which I felt myself, he gave me a note to the Prefect of Police at Havre, vouching for my authenticity, and, on due consultation, as the train got to Havre two hours before the packet sailed, we settled there would be plenty of time

for me to get my passport from the British Consul. Taking also a letter with me from the master of the Hôtel Biron, to a brother hotel-keeper at the Hôtel de l'Europe at Havre, I thought myself all right in case the consul should be out of the way, and any explanation demanded. This having been done, I repaired to the railway station.

While taking my tickets for my dogs and myself, a gentlemanlike young Frenchman volunteered to see my tickets were all right, and I found he was going to England in the same packet. His father, who seemed anxious about him, addressed me, saying, that as his son was strange to my country, he should esteem it as a great favour if I would attend to his travelling interests in the packet, and in England when I got there. To this I replied I would do so as long as we were together with the greatest pleasure, were it only for the gratitude I felt towards his nation for the kind and hospitable attention shown me during my visit at the Château Sauvages. We parted, I hope mutually pleased with each other. Alas, he and I little knew what inconvenience, loss and extortion, ruffianism and roguery, his son (I suppose from being in an Englishman's company) was about to meet with at Havre: we were destined not to reach England together. The train

was slow, and it arrived at the Havre station ten minutes behind time. It was a dark and rainy evening, and the moment I got out of the train, I said to two or three railway porters, "Secure me a fly to take me to the Havre packet for Southampton;" and in this the young French gentleman participated, so that there could be no mistake in the directions. I then went to get my luggage, and to secure my two terriers. Having a good deal of luggage as well as two dogs, it took me some time to get everything together, and when I had done so I came to the platform to look for my fly. Seeing no carriage of the sort at hand, I asked the porters where it was. They shook their heads, and pointed to the yawning door of an omnibus crammed full of women, children, and men; and a very consequential man wearing a moustache told me "to get in there," pointing at the same time to the omnibus, of which I subsequently found he was the proprietor, on contract with the railway company. Seeing that the omnibus was crammed, I said it was impossible for me to take my dogs among the feet of all those people, and when I said this in French, there was a murmur of approbation from the passengers.

The fact is, old Nipper, as the jolly tar in the packet had remarked, was "always ready for love

or war;" had any person trodden on him, he would have fastened on his leg, so I dared not trust him in the omnibus. The young Frenchman also declined to get in, and joined me in asking "where the carriage was that we had ordered?"

The only reply we again received was, that "No private carriage could be obtained; if we did not get into the omnibus, we could not go at all."

Detesting the overbearing manner of the conceited puppy wearing the moustache, I said, "Then the omnibus might go without me, for I would succumb to no such dishonest dictation," when, at that moment, and just as the omnibus was driving off, the young French gentleman came back to me, saying, "It is false what that man," pointing to the conductor, "and those porters say, that no carriages can be got! Do not let us put up with such imposition; here is a boy outside, who says that there are plenty on the stand, and he can bring one up in five minutes."

On hearing this, I accompanied my young friend to the outside of the station, where there were four or five cads or errand-boys, standing together. Laying my hand on the shoulder of the boy who had stated this fact as to the carriages, and assisted too in giving the order by the French gentleman, I said, "You go to the stand and bring me back a carriage;

return on the box of it yourself, and if you are quick, I will reward you with a franc."

Two or three boys were about to start, so, in a stentorian voice, I stopped them all; and, laying my hand on the selected lad's shoulder, I said, "You go, and only you—we want *one* carriage."

I then stood looking after him till he was nearly out of sight, and, as it was raining, turned to re-enter the station. While this was going on, and, as I believe, at a private signal from the rascal of an omnibus contractor, the porters brought all our luggage out into the rain. I instantly ordered it back into the dry, and dared them to refuse it shelter, told the moustached puppy he was a liar as to there being no carriage, and longed to kick him. The porters hesitated to comply, and looked towards their abettor in all they did; but on my reiterating my orders to have the luggage taken out of the rain, they obeyed me. While I was superintending this, the young French gentleman came up to me much excited, and said, "This fellow," pointing to the omnibus contractor, "all this time has had a carriage concealed round the corner close at hand; it is coming up, do not let us take it; I have already refused it, and told him he was an impostor."

"You have done quite right," I replied; "I would

sooner walk than have to do with such a rascal. Besides, as we have sent for a carriage from off the public stand, we are bound to wait and pay for it."

Up came the omnibus contractor's carriage.

"Here's a carriage, then," he said; "if you don't take it, you'll lose the packet, but you must pay me five francs before you get in."

This, I believe, was more than double what he had any legal right to charge. My young companion on this grew still more excited than ever, and said he would sooner stay there all night than submit. So, feeling just as indignant as he did, as the uncomfortable fact stared me in the face that I should never have time to go to the Consul's for my passport, I walked up to the omnibus contractor, and told him he and his carriage might go to the devil together. Had we taken this fellow's carriage, I have since found, that in the first instance, before we stirred, he would have had *his* five francs. When we had reached the quay on the eve of the starting of the packet, his driver would have demanded *five francs more*, and if I had refused it, he would have given me in charge to some of the town police, *who are in league with these drivers*, and who would have detained me, or induced me to submit to the robbery under the fear of losing the packet, by even five

minutes' detention, and being kept in Havre till the following Monday, when the next packet sailed. In addition to this, a host of empty cabs from the stand near the station would have followed us, each driver swearing, when he got to the quay, we had called him off the stand, and every man Jack of them demanding five francs, a friendly policeman ready to detain us beyond time, if we did not submit to the disgraceful extortion. Hear it, ye French gentlemen; this state of things you permit to stain the rules of transit through the realms of beautiful France; and when a stranger and a traveller complains of it, you afford him no redress. Hear it, ye railway companies from London to Southampton and Paris *viâ* Havre; this is the way you expect to keep up your traffic with advantage. But listen, Englishmen and Frenchmen, to that which is about to be related in the next and last chapter, and then wonder, if you can, that so many persons, as well as myself, would, for the future, sooner travel any other way, than risk collision, after dark, and tied to time, with the den of thieves that haunt the railway terminus at Havre.

CHAP. XVIII.

" Oh, sons of France, so true, so brave,
Why are your laws so low ? —
They let the grasp of rascal, knave,
Assault — but fine the blow.
A villain hand on knightly breast,
Medal or locket in the vest :
The heart within is surely rotten,
If Nature's laws are then forgotten ! "

Berkeley.

No sooner had the omnibus contractor sent his carriage away, which he did with a very disconcerted look, as he saw that all his share in the gains of the contemplated imposition was lost to him, than the carriage we had sent for arrived, with the messenger on the box, to whom I immediately gave the promised franc. Owing to this conspiracy to extort money, and these vexatious delays, the time in which to obtain my passport was very much straitened; so with all possible haste we proceeded to load the fly. Having in courtesy motioned my young companion in before me, I was about to follow with my two terriers, when I heard the noise of wheels rattle up and halt close to us. Not thinking that such sounds could have any concern with me, I did not even look

round, when suddenly I heard an angry and abusive voice close to me rattling out r-r-r's with the words much Frenchified of "God-damn John Bool," and at the same moment found myself rudely seized by the back of my collar; and, being but half in the carriage, and not in much of a position for resistance, dragged by my collar out of the carriage, and brought up, all standing, face to face with a hideous square-built ruffian, who then continued his violent assault by attempting to shake as well as drag me to the open door of his fly.

Not in the least comprehending the exact meaning of this violence, all I cared about was the fact of being thus touched by dirty hands; so, catching him by the collar, I took care the collaring as to severity all went one way; and as I was doing so the young French gentleman from out my fly kept saying, "Don't, sir, don't," while I thought that "don't" ought to have been addressed to the first assailant. Having shaken the fool up a bit, I flung him away from me, with a caution, in my queer French, to mind what he was shaking up in that great-coat, and was half in my carriage again, when I was seized more rudely than before, and dragged back, the dirty fists of the filthy villain tearing open the breast of my coat, and endangering anything that I might have had round my

neck. Now it chanced that there was something round my neck on which I set an immense value; so, seizing the fool again, I gave him a second shaking, still more roughly than before, and told him again to mind what he was at, for that I was getting dangerous. I then flung him from me amidst a shower of "don'ts" from my young French friend, and was about to turn to the carriage-door once more, when this mountebank went through such a series of saltations and swinging about of his arms, while he advanced on me, that I thought he was in a fit. However, he came at me and seized me by the collar; so, deeming that I had had full provocation for any retort I chose to make, I let go my right hand and caught him flush in the eye. He was too close in to me for the hit to tell with any lashing effect, besides being in a heavy great-coat; but the blow, such as it was, proved quite enough to settle all further desire on his part to come within reach; so, deeming the matter disposed of, as he thereafter kept out of arms' length, and still hoping to have time to obtain my passport, I got into my carriage and drove off.

It wanted but half an hour to the sailing of the packet; and when we arrived at the quay, to my indignant horror, there was the coward mountebank again, calling around him in the dark a lot of the

lowest grade of fish-fags and fishermen, crying out to them for assistance, and calling me the "English God-damn" who had beaten him. The blackguards closed around us, and I soon saw we had also arrived in a sort of procession from the station, two empty cabs following the one we were in, and each demanding five francs for being called off the stand.

Seeing that I was in for a row, I said to my young French friend, in remembrance of what had been promised to his father, and to act up to my desire of taking care of him — "Get your things out of the cab, take care of yourself, and get on board as fast as you can; I see I am in for a row, but don't you let that hinder you. The instant you get on board, send the steward of the packet to me, and a policeman or a *gendarme*, if you see one?" My young friend did so; and while he was gone, to my intense amusement, — for among it all I was inclined to laugh at what the idiot of a French cabman deemed his fighting attitudes, — the fellow continued his annoyance. In that he reminded me of a Chinese brave, trying with frightful grimaces and contortions of limbs to frighten an English soldier — thus, the cabman flung his arms up, about ten yards off, calling on me to come on. I kept myself to my luggage, however, for there was an evident inclination among some of the blackguards to handle it.

All this time this French fool continued to tell the bystanders how I had sworn at him, the funniest oaths, half English and half French, I had ever heard, as well as the most obscene; and this he varied by taking up their dirty hands and rubbing them against his eye, to feel, as far as I can translate his words, "the mountain raised on his cheek by the English God-damn." If it was there, it was much too dark to see it. The steward at last came up, and assured me that the time for the sailing of the packet was past; but I got him to take charge of my luggage and dogs, and convey them aboard, while I ran down to the passport office to see what could be done there. A touter, or man from one of the hotels, who spoke English and French — he was an Englishman — offering to show me the way, I hastened on, with the villain cabman running after and dipping across me as a small bird sometimes may be seen to do at a hawk, swearing and firing rattled r-r's at me all the way, but never coming within reach of my arm.

Arrived at the office, it was *shut up, expressly contrary to the printed instructions, which says it is to remain open while the packet lies at the quay.* Hopeless, then, of obtaining a passport, I retraced my steps, and about halfway encountered the first policeman I had seen. To this policeman I made the touter explain that I gave the cabman in charge for assault-

me, and attempting to extort money. The constable then made me tell my story — alas! for this fresh delay — and then heard the cabman's defence, when he put forward his face right into the cabman's till their noses nearly touched, and in slow scornful tones desired the cabman to "molest me no further, for it was impossible for me to have ordered three carriages, and as I had paid for one, the cabman, if he had been really called off the stand, must look for remuneration from the man who sent for him, or who called him off."

The constable was about then to pass on, when I made my touter assure him I wished him to go back with me to the quay, for if he did not, the moment I was left alone the blackguard would repeat his annoyances. The constable, however, refused to accompany me, and the cabman vanished in the surrounding darkness. The touter congratulated me on my having thus settled the matter, and we reached the quay. The instant I came there, there was the rascal again, dancing a sort of war-dance, and surrounded by about forty of the lowest of the low, and at his back two constables of an inferior grade to the one we had just parted with, and he gave me in charge to them for striking him and refusing to pay him his fare. They took the charge, and the spokesman of the two told me he

must detain me unless I paid ten francs, *for two cabs!*

I protested against this; some respectable bystanders who had heard the row and come up, without stepping prominently forward, cried from behind the crowd in French: "It is a shame; it is an imposition; do not pay the demand!" At this moment the steward called to me, "We are off, we cannot wait any longer;" so — as I hoped to reach the captain of the packet, and to explain my position and get his aid, having been prevented by violence from getting my passport — I said to the policeman, looking well into his face, "This is a false charge; you have no right to take the money; your duty is, if you dare, to take me before your superiors; but, as I want to reach the packet, there are the ten francs; but, at your peril, pay them to this villain. Your duty is to take the money to your chief, and let him decide what is to be done with it. I shall return and claim it again." I then told the ten francs into the constable's hand, and added, "If there is any respectable man present, I call on him to witness this payment of the money and the robbery that is put on me;" then running forward to the steps which led to the packet, I told the gendarme in charge that I had been forcibly prevented

from getting my passport; but that I had letters proving who I was, and I felt sure the captain of the packet would vouch for me. The gendarme, very civilly, said, he "could not let any one pass without a passport;" and on this the blackguards behind me gave a sort of shout of derision. I replied to the gendarme that "I knew he must do his duty whatever it was," and I called to the captain to come and explain. The captain replied by some insolent remark, the purport of which I could not catch, and laughed at me. He then gave the order to go ahead, and left me in a dark rainy night wet through on the quay at Havre, surrounded by a crowd of the lowest blackguards, and steamed away for England with every single thing I possessed, and, for all he knew, with my money.

As the vessel moved off the steward called out in a jocular vein, "Will you have your dogs to keep you company?" to which I replied, "No; and you *had better* take care of them at least, and deliver them to Mr. Matchem, at the Dolphin, or I will make you smart for it: give me at least my dressing-case—you have left me nothing." The answer to this, if there was one, was drowned in the roar of the revolving wheels, as the vessel started for her destination. It was not a pleasant fix, this, that I felt myself in, alone in a

strange place, wet through, and at the moment unfriended; and I confess that for an instant I was a prey to the bitterest feeling of anger. A jeer from the crowd behind me, however, soon brought me to a better temper; so, buttoning my great-coat to the chin, to secure the breast-pocket of my inner coat, in which was my money, I desisted from a vain stare at the lights of the receding packet, and faced right about, confronting the crowd, and very willing to get any head I could under my left arm.

In this humour I strode right at them, but they opened right and left to let me pass — I suppose, with a lively recollection of the "mountain" under the villainous cabman's eye—and, to my delight, I found the cab that had brought me not yet gone away. Having hailed him, as I was proceeding to the carriage, a good-looking young Englishman came up and said, "he had witnessed my payment of the extorted money to the policeman, and would be useful to me if he could." So, with thanks, I took down his address. The next person who put himself in my way was the touter, who had stood interpreter between me and those villains. He told me it was a regular system of fraud, and that the cabman whom I had struck was the fighting bully invariably put forward on these occasions, and pro-

fessed his delight at his having at last laid hold of a gentleman who had hit him. When on my telling him that I should require his testimony, the touter flatly refused to be forthcoming, unless I resorted for the time I must be detained while waiting for the Monday's packet, to "his hotel." He mentioned the name of "his hotel," but I have forgotten it; so all I can do is to wish that the hotel, whichever it was, had a more honest suitor to gain it custom. Having informed him that I should go to the Hôtel de l'Europe, and nowhere else; and, giving him something for what he had done, he vanished in the darkness, and then I got into my cab and drove to my destination.

On arriving at the Hôtel de l'Europe, nothing could be greater than the attention I met with; dry things were offered me by the maître-d'hôtel, but, as wet things were nothing new, I preferred keeping mine on, and at once ordering dinner. Having done justice to a very nice and comfortable repast, I retired to bed, and fell into a sort of dreamy rage about the late affair. Disjointed sentences, like the following, were for ever on my lips, a nod to sleep doing duty for a full stop.

"I wish I'd known I was to have been too late to get my passport." A nod. "I'd have caught and

held that booby ruffian's head under my arm for a week." Nod. "No skipping about then! A pillory. When I let him go, his own cab-horse would have shied at him." Nod. "That lubberly English snob of a captain too." Nod. "He's not like the captain I came over with, the captain of the new ship, the Havre." Nod. "He's a very good fellow, and would have made in to the rescue." Nod. "Well! they've got me here for three days, and I'll amuse myself with looking 'em all up. Beautiful calm night, nice passage for old Nip and Tacks. A thousand devils catch those Havre railway rascals; but for them to-morrow I should have been happy and comfortable at Beacon Lo-lod-ge," and then I am sure I fell asleep, for I remember nothing more till daylight again reminded me of my uncomfortable situation.

On awakening and getting up, I found my room was deficient of several comforts that I had been used to; and here let me ask my kind friends in France, why it is that they don't inculcate into innkeepers generally, throughout their splendid country, that it is a gentlemanly habit to be clean, and every morning to perform ablutions. All that is offered to one at a French inn or hotel, is a thing the size of a tea-cup for a basin, and a cream-jug by way of doing duty for a pitcher of water. Is it not the custom of

the French nation to wash, or do they only abstain from it in their travels? If it was their custom to wash, I very naturally deem that the hotels and inns would be prepared, as our English inns of any standing are, with the articles to enable them to do so. I, therefore, am forced, on the whole, unpleasantly to suppose that locomotive French people are not in the habit of washing while on a journey; while, of course, they do so at other times. In some other respects, too, the country inns and hotels are disgustingly filthy.

All my life, I have ever thought that when a man marries, there is no place like his house to which to take his bride; and since I have been in France, I cannot conceive anything more frightfully irruptive of all sentiment and delicacy, than to thrust a sensitive and modest girl to shift for herself among all the secret horrors of French accommodation.

At last, after many altercations and explanations with the garçon who answered my bell, he brought me up pencil and paper, and asked me to write down what I wanted, and the young lady, who was English, would understand it in the bar. I then got on beautifully, and shortly after made my appearance at the breakfast-table. Nothing could be better than the breakfast, nor more kind and perfect than the atten-

tion I received; in short, for the three days I remained there, the civility and attention were beyond the reach of moneyed remuneration, and when I paid my bill, I felt I left the hotel a debtor to its inmates.

During breakfast I resolved in my own mind a plan of proceedings, and, the breakfast being over, I at once sallied forth for the office of the British Consul, therein to lodge two complaints — one against the constable for taking the ten francs, and the other against the English captain of the packet for his insolent neglect, and for the abduction of my luggage. Nothing could be more prompt, straightforward, or courteous than the attention I received from Mr. Featherstonehaugh. He listened to my narrative, and then, to my astonishment, informed me, that no matter how gross the assault and provocation, by striking a French subject I had laid myself open to a fine of six hundred francs and imprisonment. He told me his office was constantly thronged with similar complaints; that it was the custom of the omnibus-men and cab-drivers at the Havre station to practise a well-organised system of conspiracy, extortion, and robbery against all foreigners; and that it was utterly hopeless for me to attempt to obtain justice or redress. So convinced was he of this, that his constant advice to all who complained was, that, if

they arrived at the station with but short time in which to make their arrangements and to catch the packet, he recommended them to scatter their money broadcast amongst these rogues, rather than enter into any altercation with them, or attempt to resist their manifold impositions.

"Well," I said; "but surely the Prefect of Police will not sanction the fact of a common constable enacting the part of judge and receiver of fines; that can't be right?"

"Oh, no," the Consul replied, "you may get redress there, and procure the offender's discharge; but you will find your attempt met by the following fact. The cab-driver, whom you struck, will already, and in the way of precaution, have laid his charges against you. If you let his friend the constable alone, he will not go on with his case; but, if you attack the constable, then he will press his suit. You will have no chance against him: you know no one whom you can call as a witness; the young Frenchman who was with you is gone to England; while he, your accuser, will bring any amount of false testimony, through a hundred blackguards of his class, to swear anything against you, and he will show the mark of the blow. Suppose you succeed and beat him, you will be detained here ten days or a fort-

night; if he beats you, you are amenable to both fine and imprisonment. Take my advice: put up with the temporary inconvenience, such as it is; keep the fellow at bay with your charge against his friend the constable, which will effectually check him from going on with his against you, and avail yourself of the Monday's packet."

I said I would take time to consider his advice, and then went forth to look up the young Englishman, whose address I had taken down. I found him, and he came to my hotel, and we settled that, as he knew the policeman by sight who had taken the ten francs, he should go to the office and report the fact, and ask to be allowed to point out the man. He did so, and recognised the fellow who had taken the money; but all sorts of stumbling-blocks were thrown in the way of any steps being taken against the *acknowledged offender*. At last *I was covertly given to understand by the police themselves*, that, if I did not proceed against the known delinquent who had taken the extorted money, and I have no doubt shared in it with the cabman (for I am told that is the Havre custom), the cabman would not proceed with his charge against me; so, with the advice of the British Consul staring me in the face, I resolved to let the affair be what in sporting phraseology would be called

"a draw." "Riled" and out of humour with this, and regretting that I had not half killed the scoundrel of a cabman, I wandered up and down the streets of the bustling town; and, on seeing a menagerie and the picture of a huge bear on the outside, I had serious thoughts, by way of passing the time, and for amusement, and practice against future Havre occasions—blows being forbidden—of letting myself out at so much an hour to wrestle in public with the bear; so to learn the severest dodges in hugging, and the tenderest place when compressed by Bruin's embraces, whereon I might inflict similar ursine punishment on any number of cab-drivers who might for the future come in personal contact with me.

Having thus occupied myself, I sat down wearied with everything, and wrote a note to the Consul, asking him if there was any earthly thing to be done in Havre in the way of passing the time, save the aqueous one of drowning myself from the pier. The answer was the kindest that could by any possibility be, as well as the most considerate; and soon after the Consul himself took me to see all the remarkable things in the town, and concluded by putting my name down as an honorary member at his club and reading-rooms; so I became more reconciled to my dreary situation. By way of varying my amusement, I went with my

attentive maitre-d'hôtel to the museum of stuffed zoology, and picture-gallery. The birds in the former are good, but the specimens of animals very indifferent; and I can't say much for the collection of pictures. On the whole, though, the building was fine; and it is evident to me that Havre is a place that is every hour growing into more and more importance. From the museum we went to a shooting-gallery on the pier, where I saw nothing to surprise me. In my reminiscences of Havre I must not forget a pretty and very nice Scotch girl who presided over one of the best shops, whence I supplied myself with linen and everything I needed; for in conversation with her I wiled away several lagging hours. On the Sunday the Consul called to know if I would go to church; and, in short, I cannot be too grateful for all his kind attentions.

Monday came at last, and at night, as I stood on the deck of the new packet-ship, the "Havre," once more alongside the thorough, straightforward, good seaman who brought me from Southampton to France, I looked on the lights of the town and the dim outline of the cliffs, and thus addressed myself to the sons of the nation to which I was then bidding adieu: —

"Well, gentlemen, noblemen, and soldiers of France, I don't understand the spirit of your laws,

nor how such gallant hands and hearts are kept from striking to the earth a villain who dares to seize you by the collar. Nothing shall make me believe that you would tamely submit to be thus rudely handled by a base wretch, whose dirty grasp might rend from your breasts the medals and trophies worn by you in the field of battle, and awarded by your Emperor or my most gracious Queen. Yet, if you requite such ruffianism with a blow, I am told you too are amenable to heavy fine and imprisonment. I would never willingly transgress your laws; but when I struck this fellow I was not aware of those that related to a blow. I respect your nation, and love your beautiful country infinitely too much to show any disrespect to any national regulation that belongs to her; but as a brother soldier — as your associate in palace, hall, and bower, forest and field — let me pray you to get the law rescinded which permits a ruffian to resort to personal aggression, while it prohibits the blow, so apt and ready, to the hand of chivalry that should punish his presumption."

Having thus eased my heart of all the ill-will it bore, the voyage was prosperous, and I landed at Southampton, and found all my luggage beautifully kept and cared for in the custom-house; my two little white terriers were under Matchem's good care at the Dol-

phin. On seeing the way my parcels were put together, "Ah, ha!" I thought, "when the lubberly skipper who slighted me came to know whose things they were, perhaps he altered his tone." Having breakfasted, I then went to lodge my complaint against the captain at the packet office, and wrote a similar notice to the railway officials, with a full statement of all the circumstances as to the established system of extortion and robbery existing on the French line.

Before I quitted Havre, I left in writing an information also against the constable, with a reference to the young Englishman remaining at Havre, whose testimony on the subject was conclusive, and ordered it to be delivered on the following morning to the Prefect of Police. From the English officials I had civil replies, regretting that I should have been put to any inconvenience, but from the Prefect of Police no notice whatever; and—hear it, Frenchmen and Englishmen—from none of the parties could I obtain the slightest redress. What became of the young Frenchman I know not; he promised to take a parcel for me back with him on his return to Paris, but he never came to hand. The afternoon of the day of my return from France saw me once more in my comfortable English home, happy in my visit to the Château Sauvages, happy in the few hours I was enabled to

dedicate to magnificent Paris, in love with the forests, and pleased with my sport and with the country; but disgusted with the ruffianism, rascality, and roguery permitted to exist between the town police at Havre and the scamps who ply for cab and omnibus hire at the railway-station. These villains I should scout from all remembrance, but that I hope, by thus showing them up, to obtain a reform, and be of service to travellers who may come after me.

THE END.

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